

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) – Inception Report

**Supporting the Design and Implementation of the MSP
Communication Strategy in Zanzibar**

Submitted to: Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries (MoBEF)

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1. Executive Summary

This inception report outlines the initial steps taken toward developing a communication strategy for the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process in Zanzibar. Commissioned by the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries (MoBEF), the strategy aims to enhance understanding of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), ensure a clear information flow among stakeholders, and promote active engagement from communities, government institutions, and civil society.

During the inception phase, an inception workshop was held at the ZURA offices in Unguja, Zanzibar, on June 6, 2025, with 20 representatives from key ministries, local authorities, civil society organisations (CSOs), and other stakeholders. These meetings helped define the scope of the assignment, clarify roles, and initiate discussions on communication priorities and challenges.

Two one-on-one interviews have been conducted with the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, which provided information on communication needs, existing efforts and gaps, an overview of MSP implementation, as well as preliminary information on stakeholders. Submission of the relevant documents and information will further expound on the above.

An initial stakeholder mapping was started to identify target groups, their interests, and potential communication gaps. Preliminary findings indicate a lack of consistent messaging, limited awareness at the community level, and a need for accessible formats and local languages to reach diverse audiences.

The next phase will focus on a desk review of key documents, in-depth consultations with stakeholder groups, refining communication objectives, and developing the comprehensive strategy. The final deliverable will include targeted messages, appropriate communication channels, a detailed one-year work plan, a budget, and a monitoring framework.

This report provides the basis for a structured and responsive communication strategy that aligns with MoBEF's objectives and supports a more inclusive MSP process.

2. Introduction and Background

Context of Marine Spatial Planning in Zanzibar

The Government of Zanzibar, through the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries (MoBEF), has committed to undertaking a Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process as a strategic tool to coordinate the sustainable use of its marine and coastal resources. The MSP aims to balance economic development, particularly in tourism, fisheries, and maritime transport, with the protection of marine ecosystems and the equitable use of maritime space.

As part of broader efforts to implement marine managed areas (MMAs) and fishery replenishment zones (FRZs), the MSP process provides a framework to guide decisions about where and when human activities occur in marine areas, to achieve ecological, social, and economic objectives. The MSP will apply to the territorial waters of both Unguja and Pemba islands.

Role of Communication in Supporting MSP Outcomes

Given that MSP is a participatory, multi-stakeholder process, effective communication is critical. Without consistent, transparent, and inclusive messaging, the MSP risks being perceived as a top-down intervention. A communication strategy can help ensure that affected communities, government institutions, private sector actors, and civil society are informed, engaged, and able to provide input. Moreover, it supports transparency, trust-building, and ultimately the long-term ownership and success of the MSP.

Scope of Work as per the Terms of Reference (ToRs)

This assignment involves designing a comprehensive MSP communication strategy for Zanzibar. Key deliverables include:

- An inception report summarising the approach and early findings;
- A stakeholder consultation report;
- A draft communication strategy, including messaging, channels, and target audiences;
- A final strategy with an implementation work plan, monitoring framework, and detailed budget.

The communication strategy will cover both Unguja and Pemba, and field consultations, policy review, and participatory engagement will inform its development.

3. Objectives of the Assignment

General Purpose

The primary aim of this assignment is to enhance public understanding and stakeholder ownership of the Marine Spatial Planning process in Zanzibar. A targeted communication strategy will help build consensus around the purpose and benefits of MSP, while also addressing concerns and expectations of diverse stakeholder groups.

Specific Goals

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Facilitate open and timely communication with all relevant stakeholders, including government entities, communities, CSOs, and private sector actors.
- **Knowledge Dissemination:** Ensure that information about MSP goals, timelines, and expected outcomes is available in accessible formats and local languages.
- **Community Buy-in:** Support public trust and legitimacy by creating feedback mechanisms that allow for two-way communication and local input into the MSP process.

4. Methodology and Approach

Literature and Document Review

Through the initial interviews and group discussions, several key documents relevant to the MSP process in Zanzibar have been identified and requested to inform the current communication practices, identify gaps, address stakeholders' issues, and share lessons learned. This includes national marine and coastal policy frameworks, legislative instruments, records of prior stakeholder engagement, and existing communication materials.

Stakeholder Mapping Strategy

MoBEF has an existing stakeholder matrix, which will be further evaluated as part of the needs assessment. The assessment will determine whether all key stakeholders have been included and correctly mapped, the engagement level, as well as the information needs and reach per stakeholder.

Communication Needs Assessment Approach

To understand the current challenges and opportunities for MSP communication, the team is conducting interviews and group discussions with a diverse range of stakeholders, in addition to the desk review. These assessments aim to document perceptions of MSP, identify barriers to engagement, determine preferred communication formats, and identify trusted information sources.

5. Inception Activities

Inception Workshop

An inception workshop was held on 6 June 2025 at the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, attended by 20 members from public institutions, academia, and NGOs. The workshop provided a platform to present and discuss the approach and expectations of the assignment, as well as receive feedback for the implementation process. It was also an opportunity for the participants, who are part of the MSP process, to provide insight into gaps in communication and stakeholder engagement. The workshop has been an important part in ensuring ownership of the communication products from the development phase.

Key messages shared and discussed

The discussions provided valuable insights and brought forward critical input into the development of the communication strategy and tools, including:

- Ensuring the communication strategy is in-line with the MSP strategy, and should not be implemented in silo.
- The communication strategy should also be flexible enough in its implementation to allow room for adaptability in case of changes to the MSP process.
- The one-year communication plan and budget will consider the established MSP work plans for that year, to ensure the details are practical and realistic.
- The pilot study in Zone 3 of Pemba will provide practical data to inform communication needs in the ongoing and planned work in the remaining zones.
- MoBEF is providing stakeholder information for the MSP – will form the basis of the analysis in preparation for the stakeholder engagement matrix.

Logistical overview

The agenda, presentation and photographs of the inception workshop are provided in the annex.

Desk Review Summary

Documents received include the Ministry's policy documents, a scoping study report on the state of marine spatial planning in Tanzania, Tanzania's guidelines for the development of MSP and international guidelines on MSP, as well as a stakeholder matrix for Zanzibar.

The documents provide a basic understanding of the MSP technical process in Zanzibar; hence, considerable information on the communication surrounding MSP will depend largely on the interviews and group discussions.

Initial Consultations

During the inception workshop, participants had the opportunity to discuss and present their perspectives, providing feedback to inform the development of the communication strategy, plans, and tools. Although some of the input focused on the MSP implementation, there was also feedback to inform the relevant exercise, as summarised in the table below.

NEEDS ASSESSED	INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS	INCEPTION WORKSHOP
What needs should the communication strategy, plans and tools cover?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge management - Coordinate information across key stakeholders - Manage awareness of the MSP coherently, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the entire MSP process as an integrated tool - Clearly communicate MSP plans and initiatives among all stakeholders - Provide a tool for inclusivity and participation. - Management of information especially data going public - Provide information tools to support stakeholder consultation
What information needs to be amplified?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear and coherence understanding of the MSP across all stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen communication between public and private sector stakeholders - There is some awareness on the MSP process but clarity and timely information is required for some of the stakeholders. - There is a need to establish ownership of the information source especially to local communities. - The importance of the MSP in improving livelihoods. - Better use of maps and data to inform stakeholder

		communication and engagement.
Where are the gaps in communication?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Streamlining communication on MSP to avoid mixed messages. - Storytelling as a communication tool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to make MSP relatable to its stakeholders, especially local communities and those directly impacted. - Policy and decision makers need to know the MSP as a long-term process - Timely information on the impacts of the MSP. - Connecting the MSP with critical issues such as Climate Change, and sustainable development.
Which stakeholders are either missing or not given enough attention?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local community - Private sector institutions 	<p>Politicians; Local communities; Public security institutions; Stakeholders neighbouring the zones' boundaries; Private companies in BE activities especially fisheries; Decision makers; Influential groups (sheikhs and imams); Media houses; Community Based Organisations (CBOs); Ministry of Finance; Investors/donors; Military & coast guard; Planning commission; Artisanal fishing as local fishing areas change often and are sensitive to climate change often and are sensitive to climate change, therefore data need to be constantly improved and local fishers identified; Local Government Authorities (LGAs); All agencies with a legal role/jurisdiction; Community groups eg, fisheries committees, environmental committees, women groups, people with special needs, etc.; ZAFICO; STCDA; ZIPA; Seaweed companies; Tourism and aqua-culture</p>

6. Preliminary Findings

From the initial consultations, there is a positive appetite for strategic communications as part of the MSP, with diverse levels of understanding and expectations of how the communication strategy:

- There is a positive desire for raising awareness on the MSP and its implementation process, which will support easier adoption and integration of the strategy and tools.
- There is a prevailing uncertainty of the timing and extent of engagement and information sharing with non-state actors; some stakeholders are worried of premature information sharing, while others feel delayed awareness will affect how the MSP is perceived or its acceptance among certain stakeholders (such as the private sector).
- There is a misconception of what the communication strategy can and cannot do in supporting the MSP, including a panacea for all challenges emanating from the MSP implementation.

Identified communication challenges

- MSP is a technical process which involves diverse stakeholders with different levels of knowledge and capacities in understanding it. There is a need for tailored communication to engage the various groups of stakeholders at every level, ensuring that no stakeholder is left behind.
- Institutional and governance priorities have posited biases, whether intentional or not, that have overlooked or failed to address the diverse information needs of different stakeholders, particularly local communities and non-state actors.
- Conflicting interests and expectations among stakeholders have created walls and gaps in communication with the MSP.
- There are multiple sources of information on the MSP with unclear ownership of key communication, which undermines knowledge management. This is further evidenced by the absence of information and communication personnel from the MSP process.

7. Initial Stakeholder Mapping

Effective communication in the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process depends on a clear understanding of who the stakeholders are, what their interests and concerns may be, and how best to engage them.

The mapping exercise serves two main purposes:

1. **To identify all relevant actors:** from government institutions to local communities, who are involved in, affected by, or have influence over the MSP process; and
2. **To guide the selection of appropriate communication channels, formats, and messages** for each stakeholder group, based on their roles, levels of influence, and specific needs.

The mapping began with a desk-based review of MSP-related institutions and was refined through consultations held during the inception phase. It takes into account the diversity of stakeholders across Unguja and Pemba and recognises that different groups will require different approaches to communication and engagement.

The table below presents a categorised overview of key stakeholders, their interests, influence, preferred communication modes, and recommended engagement strategies. This preliminary mapping will be continually updated and validated throughout the consultation process to ensure that no critical actors are overlooked.

A clear and actionable stakeholder mapping layout for the MSP Communication Strategy should help identify:

- **Who** the stakeholders are
- **What** their interest or role is in the MSP process
- **What influence** they have
- **What communication needs** or challenges they present
- **How** best to engage them

Stakeholder Mapping Table

Stakeholder Group	Type / Role	Interest in MSP	Influence Level (High/Med/Low)	Preferred Communication Channel	Key Concerns / Needs	Suggested Engagement Approach
MoBEF (central govt)	Government (Lead Ministry)	Leads MSP implementation, policy coordination	High	Official letters, meetings, WhatsApp, email	Inter-agency coordination, clarity on roles	Regular briefings, feedback loops
Local Government (Unguja & Pemba)	Local authorities	Implementation, local enforcement, community interface	Medium	Meetings, posters, community radio	Clarity on enforcement roles, public expectations	Local workshops, briefings in Kiswahili
Coastal Communities	Beneficiaries / Rights holders	Access to marine resources, livelihoods	Medium to High (depending on context)	Radio, community meetings, flyers, oral briefings	Impact on fishing rights, zoning changes	Barazas, door-to-door info, trusted intermediaries
Fishers & Fishers' Associations	Users	Daily access to marine zones	High (if organized)	Peer networks, radio, SMS	Fear of restrictions, limited trust in gov	Inclusion in planning workshops, fisher-specific messaging
Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)	Advocacy / Community Mobilization	Support awareness,	Medium	Email, WhatsApp, newsletters	Want participation & clarity in roles	Joint planning, co-hosted

Stakeholder Group	Type / Role	Interest in MSP	Influence Level (High/Med/Low)	Preferred Communication Channel	Key Concerns / Needs	Suggested Engagement Approach
		amplify community voice				outreach sessions
Private Sector (e.g. tourism operators)	Economic Stakeholders	Stability for operations, clarity on marine use rights	Medium	Email, WhatsApp groups, business associations	Impact on investment, zoning clarity	Policy briefs, info sessions via chambers
Media	Communication Multipliers	Story development, public information	Medium	Press briefings, WhatsApp, fact sheets	Accurate and timely info, visual content	Media kits, training sessions, guided site visits
Academic & Research Institutions	Knowledge Producers	Data, monitoring, research inputs	Low	Email, roundtables	Collaboration opportunities	Invite for validation workshops, technical reviews
Youth & School Groups	Future Users / Advocates	Environmental education, marine stewardship	Low	Social media, storytelling, school talks	Interactive, relatable content	Edu-programmes, creative campaigns (drawing, videos)

8. Key Risks and Mitigation Measures

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Low participation in stakeholder meetings	Medium	Partner with local authorities and CSOs to mobilize attendance
Mistrust or misinformation about MSP	High	Early and transparent communication using trusted community voices
Language and literacy barriers	Medium	Use of visual aids and translation into Kiswahili and local dialects

9. Proposed Work Plan and Timeline

Activity	Description	Lead Responsible	Output/Deliverable	Timeline	Notes
Contract Signing & Kick-off	Formal contract signing and internal briefing	MoBEF & Consultant	Contract in effect	Day 0	
Inception Workshop – Unguja	Introduce assignment, gather initial feedback	Meeting notes, attendance list, photos	June 6 2025		Assignment was started with workshop.
Inception Report Preparation	Full report including all inception activities, methodology and plan	10-page Inception Report		June 9-15	To be submitted to MoBEF
Desk Review	Review of relevant policies, strategies, legal documents, previous MSP efforts	Consultant	Summary of key findings for Inception Report	June 12-15	Focus on communication gaps
Stakeholder Mapping (Preliminary)	Identify and categorize stakeholders by type, influence, and communication needs	Consultant	Stakeholder mapping table	June 13 - 20	Validated during consultations
Stakeholder Consultations	Interviews, focus groups with identified stakeholders	Consultant	Raw data, summarized insights	June 13-20	May include remote consultations

Draft Communication Strategy		Consultants	June 25	
Review & Feedback	Internal review and finalization	MoBEF	June 27	
Final Communication Strategy		Consultants	June 30	Submission to MoBEF

10. Way Forward

The inception phase has laid the groundwork for developing a tailored communication strategy for the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process in Zanzibar. Preliminary activities, including the desk review framework, stakeholder mapping structure, and planning for consultations, have been initiated.








In the following weeks, the consultants will:

- Finalise stakeholder consultations in both Unguja and Pemba;
- Complete the consultation report, reflecting diverse perceptions and concerns.
- Develop a draft communication strategy with key messages, audience segmentation, and channels;
- Submit the final strategy, including a one-year work plan, budget, and monitoring framework, by the 30-day timeline.





11. Annexes

Annex 1: List of Inception Workshop Participants

INCEPATION REPORT MEETING OF MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES HELD IN MINISTRY OF BLUE ECONOMY AND FISHERIES AT ZPRA HALL
DATE: 06/06/2025

S/N	NAME	OCCUPATION	PHONE NUMBER	SIGNATURE
	ILYAS R. NASSOR	SENIOR MANAGEMENT OFFICE	0779 4237 87	
	Thani R. Said	Manager, DMC	0778 158164	
	Muhammad A. Juma	PROGRAM COORDINATOR	0658 21051	
	NASSOR A. NASSOR	FISHERIES	0777 854386	
	HAMIDA A. MOHAMMED	COORDINATION OFFICER	0777 50 4868	
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INCEPATION REPORT MEETING OF MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES HELD IN MINISTRY OF BLUE ECONOMY AND FISHERIES AT ZPRA HALL
DATE: 06/06/2025

S/N	NAME	OCCUPATION	PHONE NUMBER	SIGNATURE
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	SARIM U. BAKAR	FVPD	0773519760	
	SUSANNE I. MBISE	CONSULTANT	0766 263 8 44	

INCEPETION REPORT MEETING OF MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES HELD IN MINISTRY OF BLUE ECONOMY AND FISHERIES AT ZPRA HALL

DATE: 06/06/2025

S/N	NAME	OCCUPATION	PHONE NUMBER	SIGNATURE
	Sheedia J. Harneel	Geographical Information Systems Officer	067-855331	
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	Khamis A. Hamdani	TOURISM OFFICER	0777 598597	
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INCEPETION REPORT MEETING OF MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES HELD IN MINISTRY OF BLUE ECONOMY AND FISHERIES AT ZPRA HALL

DATE: 06/06/2025

S/N	NAME	OCCUPATION	PHONE NUMBER	SIGNATURE
1	Zaidur Kasim Nohman	OPS - MOBEF	+255772011011	
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Annex 2: Meeting Agenda

Internal Facilitator Agenda – Inception Workshop: MSP Communication Strategy

Location: MoBEF, ZURA Meeting Room

Date: 6. June 2025, 09-12

Duration: 3 hours

Audience: 15 Representatives from the ministry

Workshop Goals

- Identify key MSP stakeholders and their communication needs.
- Understand current knowledge, perceptions, and channels.
- Gather feedback on the Ministry's communication efforts to date.
- Lay the foundation for stakeholder-led communication design.

Outputs to Document

- 10 Images
- Stakeholder map
- Communication needs
- Channel preference
- Summary of perceived impact

Agenda & Facilitation Plan

Session	Time	Objective	Format	Information Collected
1. Welcome & Introduction	08:30 – 08:45	Formal opening and objective framing	MoBEF & Consultant Presentation	
2. ToR and Methodology Brief	08:45 – 09:00	Present scope, deliverables, and consultant approach	Slide Presentation	Clarity on expectations
3. Understanding MSP & Roles	09:00 – 09:30	Understand current status, responsibilities, and who is involved	Q&A	Org structure, lead units, partners, team responsibilities
4. Communication Resources	09:30 – 10:00	Identify existing tools, platforms, staff, and past efforts		Inventory of comms tools, staffing, budgets, channels

Break	10:00 – 10:15	—	Coffee/Tea	
5. Assessing Communication Gaps	10:15 – 10:45	Identify what's not working and where improvements are needed		Pain points, recent failures or gaps
6. Understanding Stakeholders	10:45 – 11:15	Identify primary target groups, their needs, and relationships		List of key stakeholders + communication gaps by group
7. Preferred Channels & Trust	11:15 – 11:45	Find out which channels are trusted, used, or failing	Targeted questions with probing follow-ups	List of effective/ineffective media per audience
8. What Does Success Look Like?	11:45 – 12:15	Clarify MoBEF's vision for the strategy's impact and outcomes	Consultant-led Q&A	Communication objectives and impact indicators
9. Wrap-Up & Next Steps	12:15 – 12:30	Confirm data gathered and explain what comes next		

Annex 3: Workshop Photos (10 photos)

Higher Resolution images can be found [here](#).







MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING (MSP)- COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR ZANZIBAR

INCEPTION WORKSHOP
6 JUNE 2025
ZANZIBAR

AGENDA

- Registration & Familiarization
- Setting Expectations
- Presentation & Activities
- Wayforward
- Conclusion of the Workshop



BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Background

- As part of the implementation process of the MSP in Zanzibar, a communication strategy is sought to ensure strategic and coherent delivery of information to key stakeholders, as well as establish feedback mechanisms to ensure effective and sustainable participation.

The Purpose

- To develop communication and information tools that will support the ministry in raising awareness and knowledge on MSP in Zanzibar. Which are:
 - a communication strategy;
 - One-year detailed implementation plan and
 - A detailed budget for the implementation plan.
- Improve the visibility of the Marine Spatial Planning, sustainably.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

PHASE 1: INCEPTION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Review the ToR and relevant MSP documentation (policy, legal, technical).
- Conduct internal consultations with MoBEF teams to understand roles, communication efforts, existing resources, and institutional expectations.
- Host two inception workshop to gather initial insights and map stakeholder relationships and communication channels.
- Produce an Inception Report summarizing findings, workshop outputs, and a refined work plan.
 - **Key Outputs:** Inception Report, list of stakeholders, initial communication needs, meeting minutes, and photographic documentation.



PHASE 2: STAKEHOLDER MAPPING AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Identify all relevant stakeholder groups using desk review and workshop input.
- Assess attitudes, perceptions, and levels of awareness related to MSP.
- Conduct targeted interviews or focus group discussions as needed.
- Identify communication gaps, trusted channels, and stakeholder-specific challenges.

Key Outputs: Stakeholder consultation report, stakeholder map, communication gap analysis.

PHASE 3: STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- Develop the draft Communication Strategy, including:
 - Key messages and themes
 - Audience segmentation
 - Communication objectives and expected impact
 - Preferred channels (media, interpersonal, digital, traditional)
 - A media engagement plan and feedback mechanisms
- Integrate visual tools (e.g., message matrix, timeline, stakeholder map) to support clarity and adoption.

Key Outputs: Draft MSP Communication Strategy, visuals for stakeholder testing, feedback synthesis.



PHASE 4: FINALIZATION AND VALIDATION

- Incorporate MoBEF and stakeholder feedback into the final strategy.
- Add a detailed one-year communication work plan and implementation budget.
- Present the final strategy to MoBEF and key stakeholders for formal endorsement.
- Provide editable versions and a handover briefing.

Key Outputs: Final Communication Strategy (with budget and M&E plan), stakeholder presentation, handover package.



THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

THE OUTLINE:

1. The Executive Summary
2. Background & Rationale
3. MSP Communication Objectives
4. Stakeholder mapping & analysis
5. Key messages, channels & tools
6. The One-Year Implementation Plan
7. The One Year Budget Plan
8. Tracking, Monitoring & Evaluation
9. Risk Management



THE TIMELINE



BUILDING BLOCKS

1



RESOURCES

2



COLLABORATION

3



RELEVANT ACCESS

FEEDBACK?

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