



International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre

COMMUNICATION PLAN

2016



COMMUNICATION PLAN 2016

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International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre

IGRAC (International Groundwater Resource Assessment Centre) facilitates and promotes international sharing of information and knowledge required for sustainable groundwater resources development and management worldwide. Since 2003, IGRAC provides an independent content and process support, focusing particularly on transboundary aquifer assessment and groundwater monitoring.

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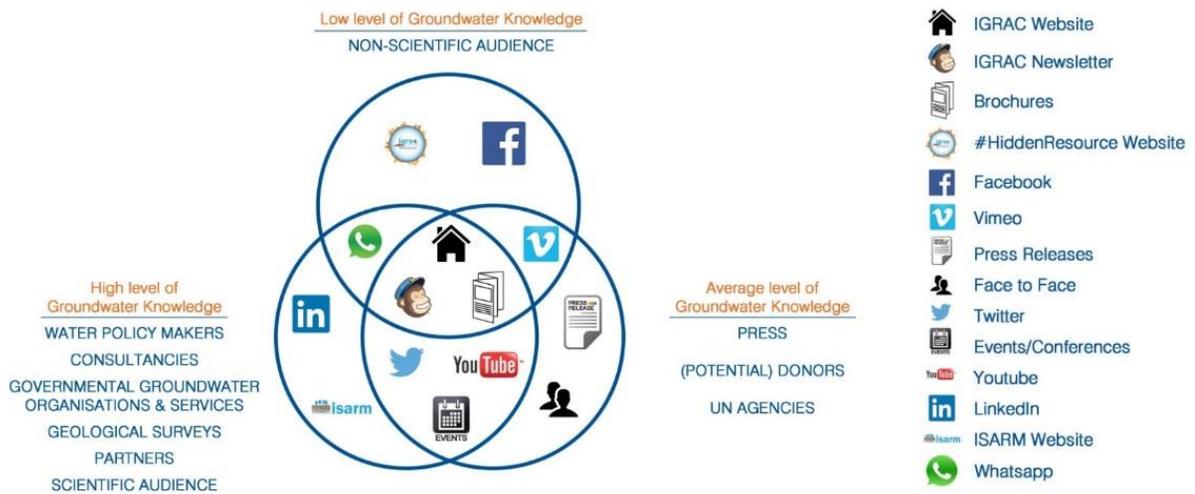
1. INTRODUCTION

In 2015, a two-year communication strategy was written, which forms the foundation of IGRAC's communication efforts also for 2016. Based on fundamental strategic elements such as mission, vision and organisational goals, the IGRAC identity and communication goals have been defined.

These communication goals have been split up in two categories. Firstly, goals focused on the outreach of IGRAC's communications. Secondly, goals focused on the effect of its communications. All goals should be completed within two years. In 2015, IGRAC's communication efforts mainly served the outreach goals, because it was important to first create the network needed to have impactful communication. This year, the focus will gradually shift towards accomplishing the effect goals.

In its communication strategy, IGRAC defined its main target audiences divided in primary and secondary target groups. The three primary target groups that have been identified were non-scientific public, donors and scientific public.

After these target audiences were defined, they have been linked to media and communication tools IGRAC has at its disposal. The figure below shows an overview of media that is either used already or will be used in the near future along with the linked target audiences. As can be seen in this model, the IGRAC corporate website, newsletter and brochures are three media types that suit all target audiences. Additionally, there are specific media that only suit one or two target audiences. This overview assists the communication specialist when having to decide which media to use for campaigns focused on specific target groups.



In this Communication Plan 2016, IGRAC's activities for the upcoming year will be unfolded. The IGRAC Communication Strategy serves as the foundation on which the 2016 Communication Plan is built.

2. TARGET AUDIENCES

IGRAC has several stakeholders and therefore multiple target groups as well. For that reason, target groups have first been identified. Afterwards, these target groups have been regrouped and divided in primary target groups and secondary target groups. Please note that this division does not say anything about the importance of these particular groups. This division has simply been made, because IGRAC does not have the capacity to set up targeted campaigns for each single target group. Therefore, for the timespan covered in this Communication Plan 2016 (see 6. PLANNING) IGRAC will mainly focus on these three main target groups first.

In the table below is given an overview of all IGRAC's target groups, including IGRAC's message for those groups and the level of groundwater knowledge these groups may have.

Target Group	IGRAC's Message	Level of Ground-water Knowledge
Non-Scientific Public	We can explain what groundwater is and why and how one should use it sustainably	Low
Press	Are you interested in groundwater? Then IGRAC is the ideal first contact, because we can either provide you the information you need or connect you to organisations/individuals that have this information.	Low/Average
Donors	We have skills, knowledge and information that could be helpful for various water-related activities. We deliver!	Average/High
UN Agencies	IGRAC is your partner as well as the UN groundwater knowledge hub.	Average/High
Consultancies	We have products and services that could be helpful for projects. We deliver!	High
Scientific public	We provide information and outcomes based on solid research, often in collaboration with universities and research centres.	High
Partners	We are open for (project) partnerships.	High
Geological surveys & other gov. groundwater organisations	We are assessing and monitoring groundwater resources on regional and global level. Your contribution is vital to come up with a realistic assessment and prediction worldwide, which is very relevant for all of us.	High

2.1 PRIMARY TARGET GROUPS

As mentioned in the text above, a division has been made between primary and secondary target groups. Two aspects have played an important role when making this division, namely level of groundwater knowledge and level of engagement.

Different target groups require different approaches and every single target group needs to be addressed using a different key message, terminology, tone-of-voice and media. Therefore, it was important to sort the target groups based on their level of groundwater knowledge first and select primary target groups from different levels (as shown in table below).

TARGET GROUP	LEVEL OF GROUNDWATER KNOWLEDGE
Non-Scientific Public	Low
Donors	Average/High
Scientific public	High

Eventually, the three main target groups that have been identified are non-scientific public, donors and scientific public. The first has been selected because it is somehow yet unreached. While many people within the water sector already are familiar with IGRAC, the 'general public' still is not. At the same time, this group should become more aware of the importance of sustainable use of groundwater and is therefore an important group to include in our communication strategy. All communications aimed at this group is therefore strongly targeted at creating such awareness.

The second target group, (potential) donors, has become a primary target group because of changed financial circumstances. Given the financial crisis and subsequent budget cuts from IGRAC's funders, it is necessary to shift the focus to potential donors and intensify fundraising activities. For that reason, this group has become one of the primary target groups.

The third and last primary target group is the scientific public. Unlike the other two target groups, IGRAC already has a good bond with this scientific audience and so far, many publications have been written and designed for this group. The main reason why this group has been selected as primary target group is because it is such a broad group. For example, texts written for this group are also suitable (readable) for consultancies, (project) partners, geological surveys and other governmental groundwater organisations, because they all have the same level of understanding about groundwater and use the same terminology. Therefore, this primary group actually covers the target groups with high level of groundwater knowledge.

2.2 SECONDARY TARGET GROUPS

Below are listed the secondary target groups:

- UN Agencies
- Water Policy Makers (National/International)
- Geological surveys and other governmental groundwater organisations & services
- Press
- Consultancies
- Partners

3. COMMUNICATION GOALS

The communication goals should be in line with IGRAC's organisational goals, which are further explained in the Communication Strategy. In addition, these communication goals should be split up in two categories. Firstly, goals focused on the outreach of IGRAC's communications. Secondly, goals focused on the effect of its communications. All goals should be completed in 2016.

Since until mid-2014, there has not been a strategic approach on IGRAC communications, there are still many goals left to pursue. However, it is advisable to first focus on outreach. Therefore, IGRAC mainly focused on accomplishing the outreach goals in 2015. In 2016, IGRAC will continue to pursue the last outstanding outreach goals that have been defined in the Communication Strategy that has been written in July 2014 as well as a new set of outreach goals. However, while accomplishing a growing number of outreach goals, the attention will gradually shift toward the so-called communication effect goals.

3.1 OUTREACH

In 2015, IGRAC's communication efforts mainly served to increase the Centre's outreach. Back then, IGRAC was still lacking the network needed to have real impact with its communications. Therefore, it was important to first develop such network in order to have the outreach needed for powerful communication. The following goals have therefore been set when writing the communication strategy:

1. Set up a Facebook page and get 7,500 likes (followers)
2. Set up a Twitter account and get 1,000 followers
3. Reintroduce the IGRAC newsletter and get 2,000 subscribers
4. In July 2016, the number of visitors of the IGRAC website should be twice as high as in July 2014
5. IGRAC's audience should become more diverse and international than it currently is. Currently, the majority of our website visitors and newsletter subscribers are from Europe, USA and Australia.

By the end of 2015, IGRAC's Facebook page had 12,980 likes, which is already 5,000 more than expected. Also the third goal has been reached in within the timespan covered by the communication strategy, since IGRAC reintroduced its bimonthly newsletter, which currently has 2,341 subscribers. The fifth goal has been accomplished as well. The audience of the IGRAC website has been more diverse in 2015, compared to 2014. In 2015, a higher percentage of its visitors were based in Asia and Africa. Also the percentage of the Latin-American website visitors has risen in comparison with the 'Western' visitors, but not as substantial as the African and Asian ones.

3.1.1 Outreach goals 2016

With still a half year left, the remaining two goals are on track to be accomplished as well. Within a year, IGRAC's Twitter account attracted 659 new followers, from 74 in 2014 to 733 by the end of 2015. Therefore, it is to be expected that also this goal will be accomplished in 2016. The same holds for the goal regarding the number of visitors for the IGRAC website. After assigning a dedicated staff member for communications, the number of visitors increased with 31 percent (average) thanks to the more frequent content updates and social media links. The launch of the newly developed IGRAC website in September 2015 increased the number of visitors even more. Over the last four months of 2015, there have been on average 71% more website visitors than in the same period in 2014. The planned website improvements in 2016 (see 5.2.1 IGRAC website) should push the number of visitors even more until the goal of a doubled number of visitors compared to 2014 has been reached.

With the previously set Facebook goal already reached and the Twitter goal soon to be reached, a new set of social media reach goals have been set for 2016 (see table below).

Medium	2014	2015	2016
Facebook	190	13.201	20.000
Twitter	74	743	1.500
LinkedIn	85	175	350

3.2 EFFECT

The effect-related communication goals below have been set in the Communication Strategy written in 2014. However, since the emphasis in 2015 was placed on increasing outreach, these goals are still valid for 2016. In fact, IGRAC's communication efforts will increasingly be aimed at accomplishing these effect-related goals. Thanks to its increased network and outreach built up in 2015, IGRAC will be more likely to accomplish the following goals in 2016:

1. Create more awareness about the importance of groundwater, especially among the non-scientific audience
2. Increase IGRAC's visibility among the scientific audience by better promoting IGRAC's publications
3. Become the groundwater hub, the first place hydrogeologists, hydrologists and geologists visit when they need groundwater-related information
4. Increase IGRAC's visibility among potential donors and partners by better highlighting the services IGRAC can offer them

4. MAIN MESSAGES

In order to accomplish the set communication goals and reach the defined target audiences, it is important to convert the strategic approach into a few clear messages. These messages have a clear link with IGRAC's corporate values and are tailored to three different primary target groups.

4.1 NON-SCIENTIFIC AUDIENCE

For the non-scientific audience, the main message IGRAC wants to convey is that groundwater is a precious resource and we can explain why and how one should use it sustainably. This will lead up to the 'Groundwater, the #HiddenResource' campaign, which aims to increase the awareness about the importance of groundwater. The pay-off of this campaign is: 'Let's reveal the hidden resource called groundwater!'

4.2 DONORS

The main message IGRAC wants to share with donors is: 'We have skills, knowledge and information that could be helpful for various water-related activities and we deliver!' This message will be supported by the pay-off: 'IGRAC, your partner in groundwater'

4.3 SCIENTIFIC AUDIENCE

Regarding the scientific audience, we want to communicate to them that we provide useful and interesting information and outcomes based on solid research, often in collaboration with universities and research centres. To highlight what is being done by the centre, IGRAC will use the pay-off: 'Monitoring, Mapping and Monitoring the World's Groundwater'.

5. METHODS AND MEDIA

This section provides further explanation about the methods and media that will be used to reach the set goals and share the previously defined messages.

5.1 METHODS

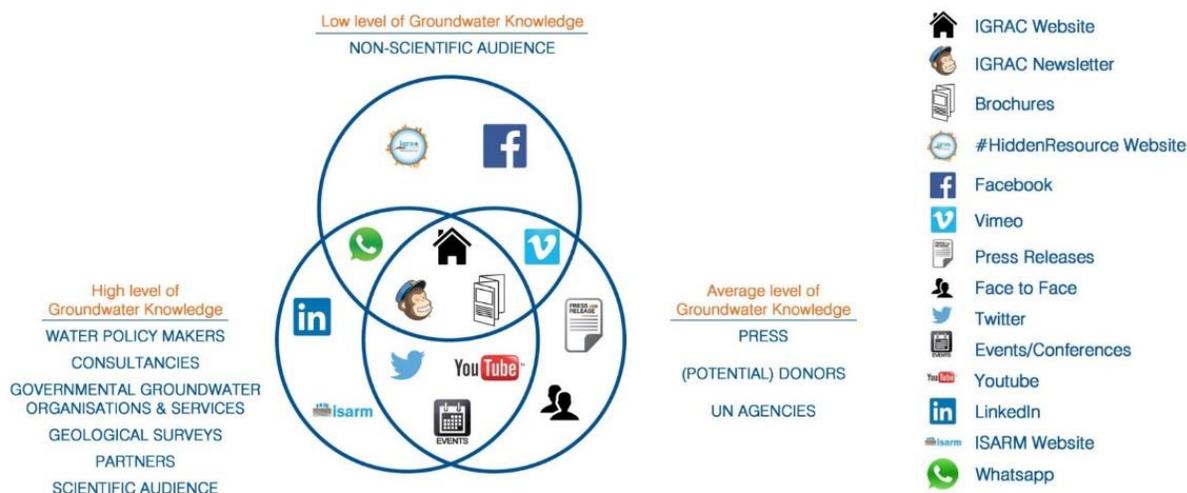
Three different methods will be used, namely direct communications, indirect communications and multimedia communications.

- **Direct Communications** means that IGRAC will approach its target groups directly. For example, this will be done using the MIM mailing list for the bimonthly IGRAC Newsletter or by attending events with exhibition stands. However, the main mean of direct communications is communication with potential donors and project partners. Information kits showing all services IGRAC could offer will be developed and given to staff members, who will directly approach these donors and partners to discuss potential for cooperation.
- **Indirect Communications** means that IGRAC will communicate indirectly with its target groups, for example by press releases. Another example of indirect communication is communication via partners. Since IGRAC is working under auspices of two big organisations, UNESCO and WMO, it is able to use the extensive network of those organisations. By providing these two major partners interesting IGRAC communication materials, IGRAC will be able to communicate with new target audiences via these partners. Apart from these two organisations, we can communicate via our other main partner, the Dutch government, as well.
- **Multimedia Communications** obviously means that IGRAC will communicate with its target audiences through multimedia such as its website, social media channels and videos, not knowing whether the audience it reaches is really part of IGRAC's target groups. Apart from the IGRAC website, which is so mainstream that it is suitable for all target audiences, these multimedia communications mainly aim for the non-scientific audience. However, more detailed information on the linkages between target audiences and communication tools is given in 5.2.

5.2 MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS

After having defined the methods, the next step is to select the most suitable media or tools. When taking this step, it is crucial to keep in mind which media is the most suitable for specific target audiences. In the figure below is shown an overview of media that is either used already or will be used in the near future along with the target audiences they will be used for.

As can be seen in the model below, the IGRAC corporate website, newsletter and brochures are three media types that suit all target audiences. Additionally, there are specific media that only suit one or two target audiences. This overview assists the communication specialist when having to decide which media to use for campaigns focused on specific target groups.



5.2.1 IGRAC Website

In 2015, IGRAC developed its new website (www.un-igrac) in order to attract more visitors and meet their requirements. This has already resulted in more website visitors and positive feedback from several stakeholders. However, IGRAC will continue improving this new website and has several additional actions planned for 2016. The most significant one is the multilingual option that will be added. This will allow visitors to access the most crucial information in other languages than English. Considering the regions in which IGRAC is most active, the firstly added languages will be French, Spanish and Russian. Mandarin, Arabic and Portuguese may also be added in a later stage.

IGRAC will also make some additions in terms of content. Leading up to the launch in September 2015, IGRAC already initiated the 'What is Groundwater?' section. This should serve the non-scientific audience by offering the groundwater basics and explaining some of the terminology. In 2016, IGRAC aims to expand this section and offer interesting content, in text as well video.

5.2.2 ISARM Website

ISARM (Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management) as well as its website (www.isarm.org) is initiative of a UNESCO and IAH led multi-agency effort aimed at improving the understanding of scientific, socio-economic, legal, institutional and environmental issues related to the management of transboundary aquifers. The website of this initiative will mainly serves scientific audience, but is pretty outdated. Therefore, IGRAC will redesign the ISARM website in 2016. The current website does not have a 'responsive design' and is therefore not suitable for mobile devices. Therefore, IGRAC will create a new website which will also have a different look-and-feel and use a different Content Management System (CMS). This new CMS will allow IGRAC to easily make adjustments to the website.

5.2.3 #HiddenResource Campaign

In November 2014, IGRAC launched a new animated video about groundwater called 'Groundwater, the Hidden Resource'. This video is part of the #HiddenResource campaign, which has the objective to raise awareness for the importance of groundwater. In 2016, IGRAC will initiate more #HiddenResource communication efforts, for example by creating a French and Spanish version of the previously mentioned video.

5.2.4 Brochures

Creating brochures is a relatively inexpensive form of advertising is therefore a communication tool used by practically every organisation. For 2016, IGRAC is planning to develop several brochures to develop brochures for the following IGRAC services:

- Global Groundwater Information System (GGIS)
- Global Groundwater Monitoring Programme (GGMN)
- IGRAC Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) activities

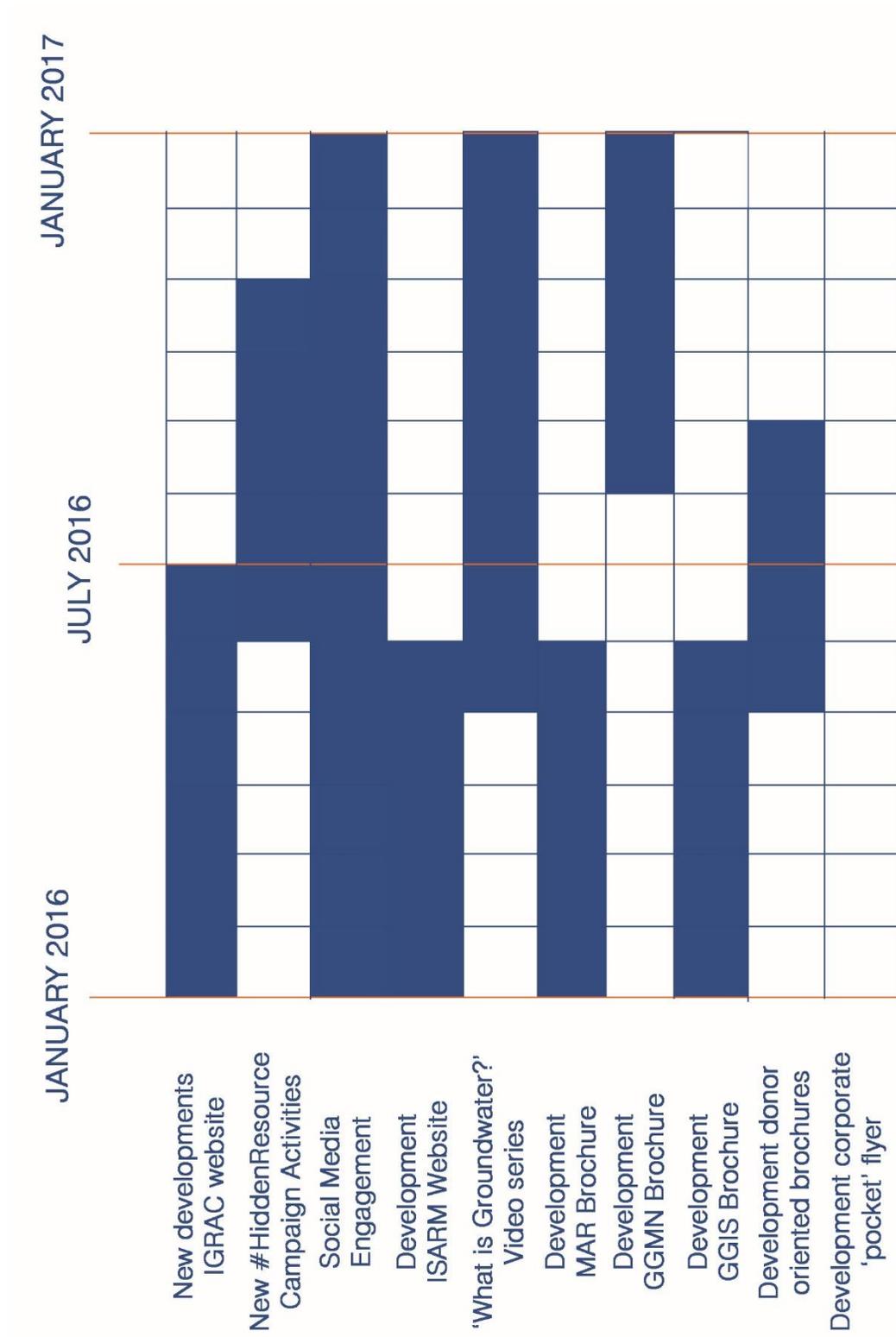
5.2.5 Social Media

In 2016, IGRAC will continue to use the currently used social media. In July 2014, IGRAC started using social media as communication tool. These three social media channels have been selected, because they all attract a different audience. While followers of the IGRAC Facebook page are relatively young (65% <30) and particularly coming from developing countries, the IGRAC LinkedIn 'fanbase' mainly consists of more senior followers. Since the IGRAC Twitter is being followed by a lot of other companies, almost exclusively from developed countries, this serves a different audience than Facebook and LinkedIn. These disparities between the audiences of the various social media channels enables IGRAC to either focus on one specific target audience using one medium or reach all target audiences by integrating all channels in its communications.

Since the launch of its new website in 2015, IGRAC support sharing its content through almost every social media channel, including the instant messaging app 'Whatsapp'. Many websites have already integrated social media sharing in their websites, but Whatsapp (as well as similar messaging applications) is the next big thing when it comes to sharing news items and other interesting web content. For now, IGRAC simply added a Whatsapp 'share' button to its news pages, which enables website visitors to directly share a news item with friends using their phone. In a later stage, IGRAC can start using Whatsapp more frequently and for different purposes, for example by inviting people to subscribe for a Whatsapp news feed in which the subscriber will receive news updates on their phone. Since almost every company already has a Facebook and Twitter account, your messages can easily get lost in the endless list of updates on the followers' timeline. Direct messages on your phone, on the other hand, are not likely to be ignored.

Apart from these social media and instant messaging platform, IGRAC also has a Vimeo and Youtube account. Video is a powerful media and IGRAC makes use of it as well. When it comes to platforms to share these videos, there are basically two big players: Youtube and Vimeo. IGRAC has weighted the pros and cons and eventually decided to use both. Vimeo has a smaller community than Youtube. However, it does not add distracting banners or annoying 30-second advertisements before your video starts and is therefore very suitable for embedding video in news pages on the IGRAC website. Youtube on the other hand is the most used video-sharing platform on the web and, perhaps even more important, is owned by Google. Therefore, the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for properly optimised videos is way better than that of Vimeo videos. To put it crudely, by using both platform IGRAC can offer both quality (Vimeo videos without ads) and quantity (dissemination of videos using Youtube). Now that the new IGRAC website has been launched, which supports multimedia way better than the previous one, IGRAC aims to make better use of video in 2016. Especially with regards to the previously mentioned 'What is Groundwater?' section, IGRAC will create videos that will for example explain what groundwater's role is within the hydrological cycle.

6. PLANNING





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