



## FAQ on Communicating as One

December 2015

1. Do we have specific examples of terms of reference (TORs) for UNCGs to address cases where countries have a UNCT and a UN mission?
2. In some cases, UNCG members are technical staff who have the added function of supporting this interagency group. Is there any policy guidance for agencies to include communication functions for technical staff on their annual performance evaluations?
3. Are there any official instructions or guidelines to integrate advocacy and communications as part of the UNDAF outputs rather than keep it separately as a UN communications workplan?
4. How can UNCGs support UNCTs in setting the advocacy and communication objectives and priorities?
5. What mechanisms can we use to improve the communication between the UNCG and the UNCT?
6. How can we communicate the role of the UN in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?
7. Are there any trainings that explore the Communicating as One model?
8. Which communication channels can agencies use that are not social media?

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Do we have specific examples of terms of reference for UNCGs to address cases where countries have the presence of a UN mission?

The [UNDG Information Management System \(IMS\)](#) includes a reports section where users can download examples of documents related to the Communicating as One (CaO) process. Users can target the search to countries that have a political mission and download their CaO related documents that might be of interest such as terms of reference (TORs).

Examples from other countries can always help beginners to the CaO process to draft a proposal to be shared with future UNCG members to agree on the final TOR of the group.

Among the common key objectives of the UNDG we can highlight:

- Developing a UN Joint Communications Strategy
- Provide guidance to the United Nations Country Team (UNCT)
- Draft and disseminate press releases and contributing to the One UN or the UNCT website

Regarding the structure of the UNCG, it is common that the group includes a secretariat and a chair. The mechanism to appoint the chairs as well as the profile of the person to chair the group is flexible. The guidelines propose to have a UNCT member chairing the group, but there is no fix model for it. Also, the

secretariat role can be played by the Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) or by the UN Information Centre (UNIC), in case there is one functioning at country level, but there is no strict rule on it either. Each country is advised to look for the best mechanisms that will ensure an efficient, dynamic and active group.

Other common objectives that UNCG TORs might include can be found in the [Guide to Communicating as One](#). The guide also includes examples on how to structure the UNCG.

[In some cases, UNCG members are technical staff who have the added function of supporting this interagency group. Is there any policy guidance for agencies to include communication functions for technical staff on their annual performance evaluations?](#)

This is a relevant issue that was discussed at the Communicating as One Workshop held in South Africa in 2015.

In the case of UNIC staff, the organization has already addressed this issue incorporating goals related to the functioning of the UNCG in the staff annual evaluations. All Department of Public Information (DPI) staff members have this as a mandatory task.

Communications staff from AFPs can also include their related activities to the work of the UNCG in their performance evaluation as a way to ensure that the time and effort of staff members implementing the Communicating as One approach is recognized by the organization.

[Are there any official instructions or guidelines to integrate advocacy and communications as part of the UNDAF outputs rather than keep it separately as a UN communications workplan?](#)

This is a critical question to integrate communication and programming. The new UNDAF guidance to be issued next year will ensure that communications is reflected in the major milestones of the UNDAF process. The UNDG Advocacy and Communications Working Group established last year will look into this and other issues to better provide support to UNCGs and UNCTs.

Having advocacy and communications reflected in the UNDAF can have an impact in the financial resources related to communications: It can translate into having budget for the implementation of a joint strategy.

[How can UNCGs support UNCTs in setting the advocacy and communication objectives and priorities?](#)

To set the UN advocacy and communication priorities at country level, the UNCG has to take a pro active approach and propose a number of strategic communication objectives and priorities to the UNCT for their feedback and approval. It is the role of the UNCG to provide a proposal to the UNCT to agree on the final objectives of the team.

[What mechanisms can we use to improve the communication between the UNCG and the UNCT?](#)

A way to promote a good collaboration and understanding between both groups – UNCT and UNCG – is to include a member of the UNCT as chair of the communications group. This is not only recommended in the guidelines, but is proven that is a way to ensure a reporting mechanism from the UNCG to the UNCT. If no member of the UNCT is available to take on this position, the chair of the UNCG should participate at UNCT meetings to provide relevant updates of the UNCG work to UNCT members.

## How can we communicate the role of the UN in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

Being the new development agenda a multisectorial and multi-faceted agenda requires a really strong cross cutting communications component, and this aspect of the agenda will be absolutely critical.

DPI is preparing a number of materials for country teams, UNCGs and UNICs that will highlight and lead the communication aspects of the implementation of the SDGs. The first part of the implementation of the SDGs will be awareness raising. DPI is working on a number of tools that will make this easier for the teams in the field.

Raising awareness of this new agenda also means to ensure that governments understand the role of the UN in supporting this agenda which was endorsed by Member States in September.

The 2030 development agenda is owned by Member States and they should look at their priorities and national development strategies and see how to align them with the new global priorities. The 2030 agenda is not a UN agenda, but a Member States' agenda.

## Are there any trainings that explore the Communicating as One model?

In March 2015, the UNDG Advocacy and Communications Working Group together with the UN Staff College organized the first Communicating as One training which took place in South Africa. However, most of the future trainings related to the CaO model are planned to be web-based due to the financial implications of face-to-face trainings.

At country level, RCO can provide CaO trainings to AFPs staff in other workshops that might be organized during the process of developing the UNDAF. This has resulted very helpful among UNCT in West Africa.

## Which communication channels can agencies use that are not social media?

There are many ways and possibilities to engage with our audiences that don't imply using social media. Indeed, digital should not replace traditional media. Communication channels should be used selected as a means to reach specific target audiences. Radio and traditional print media are just two examples of other communication channels to use when internet penetration is low. The UNCT in Moldova, for example, used concerts to reach youth agencies around the celebration of the Human Rights Day.