

# Communicating enhanced CER, Effectiveness, and Relevance (CER)

This UNDG Guidance Note explains how to communicate with staff and key stakeholders about CER, and also how to communicate coherently as a country team. It should be read by Resident Coordinators, Coordination Officers and Communications Specialists. Please see the related documents on forming a UNCG, developing a Joint Communications Strategy and key messages.

**NOTE:**

This tool/guidance has been developed based on the experiences of the DaO Pilot countries.



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# 1 Introduction: Change Requires Effective Communications

Becoming a more coherent, effective and efficient country team requires changing the way managers, staff and stakeholders think and work together. Changing incentives, structures and procedures are necessary parts of the coherence process, but they are not sufficient because in order to change, people must also embrace the vision for change and understand what they need to do to make that change a reality. That's where communication comes in. Remember that everything communicates. You can't *not* communicate. But you can control *how* you communicate, and the goal of communications is *influence*.

Communication is an indispensable element in any change process. Communication shapes the vision and ensures that everyone understands it, agrees with it and acts on it. Communication informs, educates and motivates. It involves people in the change process, builds commitment to outcomes and supports their ability to deal with change.

As your UN Country Team embarks on CER, it is critical to have a strategy for communicating the goals and steps that will get you there. You need to develop the key messages that explain coherence and plan the ways that you will inform and persuade your staff and stakeholders. You also need to consider the mechanisms you will use to assess attitudes and allow for a dialogue between senior managers, the staff who must implement the changes, and the stakeholders who provide essential support for the changes.

Most change efforts fail, because people are inherently resistant to change. 99 percent of the population resists change and feels anxious about it, whether the change is good or bad. Change is frightening and uncertain, and many humans inherently do not like it. People resist because they feel threatened, fear the unknown, lack trust in those leading the change, and fail to see how they will personally benefit. Leaders often mistakenly assume that their team and colleagues understand the issues, the goals and the need for change as well as they do. This is seldom the case.

To overcome these psychological barriers to change, you must motivate people's desire to change through persuasion, support their ability to change through skills and knowledge development, and provide them with "permission" to change by sharing information and communicating openly.

To inspire action, you must communicate a clear vision for greater coherence, a compelling case that makes the benefits clear, and a sense of urgency. Start with *why* the UNCT must change, then explain *what* the team needs to do to change, and finally explain *how* to make it happen. Reinforce your core messages by providing regular, timely and inspiring guidance. Make sure the communications flow in all directions so that you get feedback from your team and supporters and can fully address their needs for information and support. By communicating effectively every day through multiple channels and—walking the talk—you can empower your staff and stakeholders to support CER. This will often require over-

communication through multiple channels. Be sure to incorporate communication into each of the phases in your change process, and reflect on lessons learned as you progress.

## **1.1 Context for Your CER Communications**

Your management team and UN Communications Group should collectively set the UN Country Team's vision for CER and communications objectives for achieving your overall coherence goals. These will vary from country to country and should be developed locally and inclusively to ensure that your team feels ownership of the vision and goals. Other documents in the Change Management Toolkit describe the vision-setting process for the full UNCT in greater detail. The points below are only a starting point for your UNCG.

## **1.2 The Vision: Unite the UNCT to deliver effective development assistance**

*"We the peoples of the United Nations... United for a better world."* These are the opening lines of the UN Charter. This is why you are in the country, why your team must unite for a common cause: *"to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."* You have an opportunity to combine your strengths and become more efficient and more effective. UN Member States, the UN Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, and all the heads of UN organizations have committed to this cause. You must unite to make the UN better, stronger and more effective by focusing on its unique advantages in the new aid environment.

## **1.3 The Challenge: A fragmented system with competing interests**

Your UN Country Team needs to build consensus and morale among a diverse group of internal and external stakeholders.

Internally, UN organizations are inherently competitive with each other because they are fighting for the same sources of funding and attention from donors. Attitudes toward the Resident Coordinator System appear favorable, but there is room for improvement.

Most UN system staff seem to feel that their agencies are working together in a reasonably coordinated fashion, but at the same time many UN Development Group members feel there remain different classes of organizations within the group, with particular distrust of UNDP as manager of the RC System. The non-resident agencies are latecomers to the coherence process and integrating them has led to difficulties related largely to a lack of trust, different mandates, organizational cultures, and business models.

Many UN staff, both at headquarters and in the field, are not fully committed to a more united UN, and many lack awareness of the rationale and mechanics for the process. Those that do understand still need to be prompted to act. This is changing. There is a gradual trend of greater involvement and a growing sense of inclusiveness and forward momentum that we can support through communications.

Externally, familiarity with the RC System and CER remains limited among governments, especially in programme countries, and bilateral donors remain skeptical that UN organizations can work together coherently.

Member states are divided over UN coordination efforts. In general, major Western donors want coordination costs to be supported by core funding, while some influential developing countries are resistant to further integrating and coordinating the UN, not because of the merits of coordination, but rather for political reasons related to negotiations over other UN reform issues such as the Security Council. Government support for a more coherent UN system is likely to remain uneven for the next few years. However, there is an opportunity to build support for change from programme countries that stand to directly benefit from coherent, effective and efficient country operations.

Thanks to multiple developments in late 2007 and 2008 there has been a strong improvement in attitudes and awareness among governments. Your CER communications strategy must sustain and strengthen that shift. You need harness the UN system's momentum of change, build consensus and unity in your UN Country Team, and drive the system forward. If you fail, the UNCT could lose funding and relevance as a provider of development assistance. If you succeed, millions of people will benefit through better services from a better UN Country Team.

#### **1.4 The Opportunity: The MDGs, momentum and urgent need for change**

The Millennium Development Goals have created a unifying set of objectives for the UN system's support to countries. The UN system's global presence gives it unique advantages in helping countries develop. But as those countries develop, they are changing. The world is changing. We have a chance to serve this changing world. To do so, we must change the UN system by thinking, planning and working together more strategically and efficiently.

As your country team works to implement the lessons learned from the Delivering as One pilots and other pioneering country teams, you need to inspire and move to action the UNCT leaders, staff and stakeholders who believe in the original reasons the UN was founded, and who believe that we can create a stronger UN system. You need to mobilize those people in your country who are ready, willing and able to become agents of change.

There are probably many of these people in your team: frustrated idealists, pragmatic optimists, and future-focused people who believe that what we can do is more important than what we have or haven't done. These change agents believe in accountability, responsibility and transparency. They believe that working together and delivering more benefits all of us. And they believe that making the UN more coherent, effective and efficient is the best way to make a difference for the millions of people who are counting on your team to help them attain prosperity and equality, expand their choices and realize their rights.

## 2 The Steps of Communicating CER

Identify early on who will be responsible for communication. Too often, communication starts too late in the process once issues already have arisen. Make sure you engage in communications and communications planning from the very beginning. Follow these basic steps to create a communications campaign that drives your country team to become more coherent, effective and efficient.

Here are some suggestions on linking your communications efforts with the other steps in the coherence process.

### 2.1 Initiate and Mobilize

Engage communications specialists from the beginning, ensuring they play a role in developing and communicating the vision and mission statement. Develop key messages to explain the rationale for launching the change process and the anticipated benefits. Make clear that you will share information and communicate throughout. Consider what vehicles you can use for getting this information out to the country team and partners. Create a UN Communications Group or strengthen your existing UNCG. Please see the related guidance [Joint Communications — Creating a UN Communications Group](#) for details. Begin communicating about CER and keep doing it through all the subsequent steps.

### 2.2 Prioritize and Set Outcomes

Make sure that communications is a priority in the coherence process and is provided adequate attention and resources. In setting priorities and outcomes, make sure they are clearly explained and communicated in ways that motivate staff. Set your objectives and determine your vision. See related documents on setting a vision.

### 2.3 Determine Strategy

Develop a joint communications strategy for the UN Country Team that includes a sub-strategy for communicating CER. Please see the related Joint Communications Strategy Blueprint for details on the steps of this strategy. It includes identifying your key internal and external audiences, determining the level and frequency of communications, and the methods and channels you will use to communicate. As with any strategy, your activities should have timelines, milestones, and resources, and identify who is responsible for doing what.

### 2.4 Plan Organizational Changes

Consider the communications implications of organizational changes, particularly on staff. How will they perceive these changes? How will they react? What can be done to encourage positive responses and mitigate negative ones? Prepare to communicate the details and significance of organizational changes regularly throughout the process.

## 2.5 Plan implementation

During this stage the UN Communications Group should also develop a plan for implementing the joint communications strategy as well as a work plan for communications on further steps in the coherence process.

## 2.6 Implement

Implement your communications strategy in a way that ensures your communications activities are aligned with the other steps in the CER process. Use communications tools to help UN staff understand the why, what and how of implementing organizational changes. Regularly remind staff of the rationale, and report to staff and partners on key milestones in implementation. Try to convey a sense of progress toward a clearly defined goal.

## 2.7 Monitor and Evaluate

Communicate how CER will be monitored and evaluated. Survey staff and stakeholders as needed to ensure that everyone understands the objectives and expectations. Also monitor and evaluate the impact of your communications efforts.

## 2.8 Communicate about change

This happens throughout the change process.

## 2.9 Coordinate change and ongoing implementation

Refer to the recommendations on communicating with staff for ideas on how communications can be used as a coordination and management tool.

Please refer to the related [Communications Matrix](#) document for more details on how communications activities support and relate to the other steps of the CER process. In general, each step in the coherence process should also involve a dedicated wave of communications.

### **3 Communicating About Different Elements of CER**

If your change process includes elements such as UNDAF or common programming tool, Common Services and Harmonized Business Practices, Common Premises where feasible, Joint Communication, or Joint Resource Mobilization, you should devise communications plans and products to persuasively explain these elements to your stakeholders. Always keep in mind that your internal audience will be much more interested in the details than external stakeholders. Governments and donors will likely want only brief explanations of the elements and reports of results, impacts or efficiency gains, whereas country team staff will want to know the details of implementation and how it affects them personally. Headquarters will want the details relevant to their needs. The simplest approach is to develop standard internal communications materials and then refine or simplify as needed for other audiences. A few specific points on communicating about each element of CER follow.

#### **3.1 UNDAF or common programming tool**

For all audiences, explain the rationale for coherent programmes or programming, making sure to outline the benefits and why the UNCT is going to do things differently. All stakeholders are likely to be interested in the objectives of the programmes and their results, so plan to provide this information when you design the programmes. For UNCT staff, also focus on how the programmes will work differently, who will be involved, and how the programmes were agreed on. For donors and the host government, also provide information on their roles in the programmes, and focus on efficiency gains or increased benefits from coherent programming. How will this approach help the UN deliver more effectively and efficiently?

#### **3.2 Common Services and Harmonized Business Practices**

All audiences need to know the rationale and benefits for the new ways of operating. Donors and the host government will want to know about expected efficiency gains and should be given updates any time the UNCT has achieved these. Staff will be most interested in how these new ways of working affect their job security, roles, and responsibilities, and will need much more detail about the decision-making and implementation process. Staff need to feel they are being treated honestly and fairly, and must be persuaded that the changes will strengthen the UNCT, and that management is sensitive to their concerns.

#### **3.3 Common Premises (where feasible)**

As above, focus on the rationale and expected benefits, keeping in mind that different stakeholders will perceive different benefits. Depending on the scenario for sharing premises, you may need to explain moves, new construction, office relocation, and so forth. Contact lists and addresses will need to be updated and disseminated widely. Consider organizing office visits and tours to ensure partners and staff quickly become familiar with the new office situation. Anticipate potential problems and concerns and be prepared to address them.

### **3.4 Joint Communication**

The communications team may need to convince senior management or agency headquarters of the advantages of joint communication. Use managerially-relevant arguments: joint communications increases the UN's overall voice, uses existing capacity more efficiently, allows the UN to surge communications on specific campaigns or issues more effectively, reduces duplication, facilitates greater specialization and expertise among communications professionals, and provides better support to the RC and heads of agencies in advocacy work, for example. If Joint Communication involves changes to the UNCG, staff categories, HR, or funding issues, make sure everyone in the UNCT understands the purpose and benefits of these changes.

### **3.5 Joint Resource Mobilization**

### **3.6 Common Budgetary Framework**

In addition to conveying the expected benefits of raising money together and pooling resources and clearly explaining the technical details of budgetary frameworks, communications can also be an effective tool for mobilizing resources. See if your communications team can find new ways of supporting resource mobilization efforts, for example by improving key messages, supporting in-person advocacy efforts, and producing materials that persuasively convey the value of UN programming.

## 4 Role of the UNCG in Communicating Coherence

Your communications experts can play an important role in communicating coherence to both internal and external stakeholders. It is advisable to form a UN Communications Group or strengthen your existing UNCG before developing a strategy to promote CER. Please see the guidance note on **Joint Communications – Creating a UN Communications Group** for details.

The full UN Country Team needs to have ownership of the CER process, and consequently needs to fully participate in how that process is communicated. The best way to do this is to unite all the UNCT's communications officers or focal points into a team with a common vision and common purpose. As the UNCG guidance note explains, this can be done by agreeing on common terms of reference, ways of working and areas of responsibility. Where possible you should also explore funding, office and human resources options for supporting your UNCG.

The CER Communications Strategy should be part of your UNCT's overall Joint Communications Strategy. It should have a dedicated task team assigned to implement it. The task team should report to the RC and the UNCG, and should be led by the RC communications officer or senior communications officer if the RCO does not have a communications officer. Core capacity for internal communication is essential. Experience in outsourcing has been chequered (particularly longer term engagements of PR firms), but outsourcing specific technical tasks can prove useful if well supervised.

Make sure that the full UNCG and the UNCT management team both endorse the CER communications strategy and clearly understand their roles in implementing it.

To effect change, you need to understand staff and stakeholder perceptions. The UNCG can conduct or commission surveys of staff and stakeholders to determine their knowledge level, attitudes and behavior on key issues including coherence. In addition to designing materials, they can also help to organize what your managers do, when they do it, and especially what they say and how they say it.

A clear vision and a simple, compelling vision statement are essential for change. The UNCG can help you develop that statement. The UNCG can also help you develop key communicators in the organization and schedule their appearances. It can help the key coordination players to shape the content of their messages on coherence. Together with DOCO and other UNCTs your UNCG can develop a set of agreed key messages on CER based on the standard messages approved by the UNDG. Your communications team then helps you to shape those messages for your local context and stakeholders. It can also help to select channels and packaging for those messages.

## 5 Develop a Communications Strategy for CER

A good communication strategy must be part of the CER process. Follow the detailed guidelines for developing a **Joint Communications Strategy** found in the related guidance document. Your CER Communications Strategy will be a sub-strategy of the UNCT's overall communications strategy, and will include most of the same steps, in this case with a focus on coherence. The fully UNCG and UNCT management team should read, understand and formally endorse the strategy.

A communication strategy is simply a mechanism for organizing your efforts to share information, engage in dialogue, and announce decisions throughout your CER process, which will strengthen both the quality and transparency of your activities. It doesn't have to be a lengthy document but it does have to be a living document.

The key points are to:

- Keep it simple so that everyone involved knows the objective, and their role.
- Make it targeted - doing the important things, not trying to do everything.
- Build in review mechanisms of your communication efforts (e.g. get feedback during staff meetings) to identify and plan for upcoming communication related issues.
- Update it regularly in the light of experience and opportunities.
- Share successes and knowledge about what works (and what doesn't).

The agreed strategy serves as a binding agreement. When you tell people you're going to do something, and you care about their feedback, having a communication plan in writing will force you to carry through with your efforts. The strategy makes sure that you take advantage of all opportunities, including on-going implementation. It helps to keep communication focused and prevent unwanted surprises. Having the strategy in place increases awareness of the coherence process (why, what and how things are done), reduces anxiety and creates mechanisms for feedback on how things are going.

A few steps from the strategy are noted below with related suggestions for communicating about coherence.

### 5.1 Communications Objectives

When laying out your plan, you should keep in mind that the main purpose of this communication strategy is to reduce anxiety, enhance involvement of staff and facilitate the whole process as a means to achieving the desired results. Therefore, you need to communicate, communicate, communicate.

Be clear about what outcome you expect. What is it that you are trying to achieve with the communication plan and with the specific messages? Be direct in stating the change and

explaining the rationale for the change in relation to the overall goals you wish to achieve. CER communications objectives should go beyond raising awareness and focus on changing attitudes and behaviour. The UNCT will only become more coherent, effective and efficient when its staff and stakeholders act that way. The strategy should:

- Raise awareness and understanding of CER and its benefits
- Encourage staff and stakeholders to accept the coherence process and play active, constructive roles in it
- Pool knowledge and ensure everyone knows how to access that knowledge
- Generate ownership of the process and results

For example, your communications objectives in support of the coherence initiative could be:

- 1) Encourage UN staff from different agencies to work together as a team for greater impact and relevance.
- 2) Provide staff and stakeholders with clear, consistent and persuasive explanations of CER policies and tools.
- 3) Persuade stakeholders that coordinating and strategically planning development activities adds value and makes the UN Country Team more coherent, effective and efficient.

Desired results:

- UN Country Team is more coherent and delivers more effective and efficient programmes.
- Donors provide more support and funding for coherence and coordination efforts.
- UNCT members and non-resident agencies fully understand and support CER.

## 5.2 Stakeholder Analysis

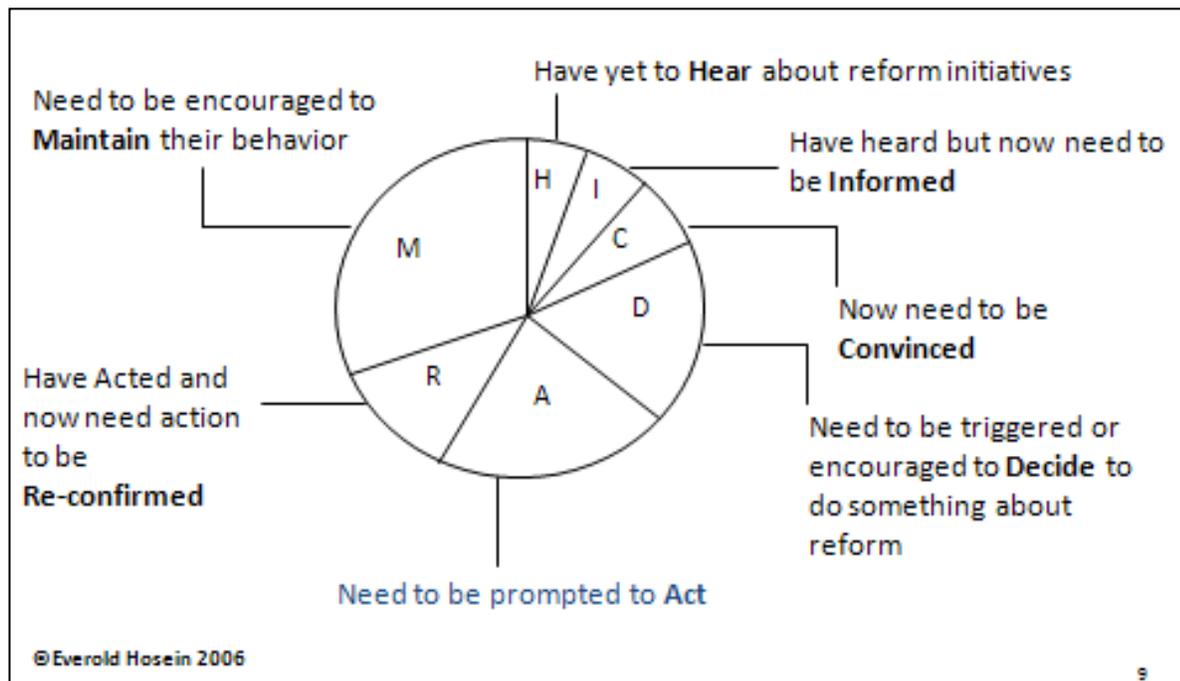
Strong and focussed communication can be a major benefit for the CER process at the country level. However, communication messages change with the public as each public will have their own specific communication needs. Knowing the needs of the public you communicate with will allow you to focus your messaging to address those needs and will make your communication more effective.

Ask people for their opinion before you implement change. Through surveys, interviews, focus groups or other means you should develop an understanding of the attitudes and awareness levels of your UNCT members and stakeholders regarding CER. This will determine which people you need to target most closely and establish a baseline for measuring the impact of your communications.

Segment your stakeholders based on their attitudes to CER and focus most of your communications energy and resources on those who need only a little prompting to act. Ample communications research has demonstrated that by honing in on these people you can tip them

past the activation point and get them to work and plan differently. The effect of seeing these “change agents” at work will generate social proof and inspire others to follow suit. Seeing people we respect doing something encourages us to do it.

Everold Hossein’s “HICDARM” model is one way to do it, based on their surveyed attitudes to an issue, in this case “working together and delivering better.”



With limited resources we cannot focus our communications on everyone. We have to be strategic, and target most of our messages and materials where they’ll have the most impact – on those who need to be prompted to act. It is essential to continuously motivate these change agents, particularly if they are in senior positions, and encourage them to act as champions.

The rest of your communications can be used to encourage the early adopters in the CER process, and if necessary, try to persuade those who are most resistant—if their resistance matters. Don’t worry about the grumblers and the laggards and the sceptics unless their unwillingness to move forward can actually stall the overall effort. In cases where you have powerful sceptics who can block changes, you may need to focus specialized communications and advocacy efforts on winning them over. But as a general rule, concentrate your communications on those people who are one step away from acting more coherently.

People need to go through stages of activation: they need to know, believe and care enough to want to act; they have to have the will to act; and once they act, they must be rewarded for doing so.

The key to getting people from HIC to DARM, from awareness to action, past this activation point, is persuasion through integrated marketing communications. To do this, you must consider the cost-benefit calculation that people are individually making.

By focusing on fulfilling our stakeholders' needs (for information, for good feelings, etc.), making it convenient, and showing that the benefits outweigh the cost, we can motivate them to work more coherently, effectively and efficiently.

### 5.3 Plan of Action

Be systematic and strategic in planning your communications products and activities for both internal and external stakeholders. The **Joint Communications Strategy Blueprint** offers ideas on how to do this.

### 5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

It is advisable to conduct a survey of your UN Country Team and stakeholders before launching the CER process to assess their knowledge and attitudes and identify the key areas that need the most attention. The survey can be supplemented by qualitative research gathered through interviews with key UNCT members and government representatives. Together these surveys can serve as benchmarks for measuring your communications efforts.

Consider these questions repeatedly as you go through the coherence process:

- Have you communicated enough throughout the process?
- Is there buy-in for the CER process among your staff?
- Is your coherence project on schedule?
- Have you utilized and updated your communication plan to involve key players around each of your milestones?

## 6 25 Tips on Communicating CER

*“If knowledge alone was enough to inspire action, the world would already be a better place. Real change requires action, and the key to moving people from knowledge to action is persuasion.”<sup>1</sup>*

Although there is no rule on how to communicate change, there are certain guidelines that you can take into consideration when preparing your strategy. Change is uncomfortable, and adapting to change is usually not easy for most people. The steps of the change process may be easy to list, but behaviour and long-held habits are not easy to change. Here are 25 tips that can help you promote a more coherent, effective and relevant country team.

1. **Ask yourself what exactly is changing and why.** We tend to use heavy jargon and vague statements that give little substance of what exactly we mean in terms of the day-to-day work reality of staff and stakeholders. When communicating, you have to allow your audience to relate to the change. It is therefore important to link your communications to the established rationale for change, which will help reinforce the fact base for any change as well as strengthen the credibility of your message. Give people reasons for acting. Research shows that adding a reason to a request increases compliance. Almost any reason will have an effect, but of course these reasons should be true and correct.
2. **Focus on those you can actually persuade.** Getting those who are against increased coherence to reverse their opinions is the hardest way to advance. They will require the most concrete evidence of benefits to change their views. Instead, start with stakeholders who are not part of the core base but have reasons to consider the arguments in favour—those who are ready to act and only need to be prompted.
3. **Make your communications M-RIP—massive, intense, repetitive, and persistent.** This is a basic principle of integrated marketing communications that you should try to apply by using your resources efficiently. Communications research suggests that a person needs to be “hit” visually and aurally about six times per day, several days per week, over a three week period or so, in a variety of communication moments, in order for a theme or idea to register sufficiently to change behaviour or attitudes. Release “flights” of products or messages, maximize distribution and re-use materials. When developing communication products, take into consideration that not all stakeholders have the same access to information—some national staff may require information in national languages, or they may lack access to computers and need an alternative way to get information.
4. **All stakeholders need to be respected, treated considerately and acknowledged.** You must understand their comfort zones—how safe they feel about making changes

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<sup>1</sup> “Discovering the Activation Point”, Communications Leadership Institute and Spitfire Strategies, 2006.  
<http://www.activationpoint.org/>

and doing things in new ways. Being part of a like-minded group focused on common goals can help people feel safer. Being in a comfort zone supports confidence, which supports action. Nobody likes to be railroaded. Suggest, don't insist. Accept that people know what they are most interested in and provide them with a way to learn more if they want to.

5. **Tell stories and circulate anecdotes.** Use narratives and personal anecdotes to show what is going on and illustrate how working together makes the UN System more effective. People respond disproportionately to good stories. A narrative is a powerful way to get a point across—consider how much we all enjoy stories. Go beyond reciting messages and talking points and tell stories about the UN's activities and changes that engage and entertain. Find anecdotes and craft stories that make the conversations of your staff and stakeholders more interesting. Make it fun, credible and memorable. Make sure it involves topics or themes that people really care about. And make your story easy to repeat.
6. **Develop a 60-second pitch.** Also known as the “elevator pitch”, this is the brief message that you get across during the briefest of meetings. Practice so that you can summarize why and how your UNCT is changing in less than a minute.
7. **Present working/planning together as the default option.** Begin any communication, whether in person or in print, with a reminder of the framework and rationale for coherence. It doesn't matter if the audience has heard this before: you're establishing “what everyone knows” and “what everyone takes for granted”. A more coherent UN is inevitable. How we define a situation tends to evoke behaviour that makes the definition come true. Stakeholders should thus participate so that they can help determine what the future UN looks like.
8. **Promote benefits so that change is embraced.** People are more inclined to work together when they see a personal benefit in doing so. They need validation for making the UNCT more coherent. An audience will not be persuaded unless it feels there is some return. The perceived benefit of taking an action must outweigh the perceived sacrifice. Most people exaggerate the risk of loss. They prefer the status quo and regard it as the norm, even though the organization and its environment may have changed a great deal over time. Essentially, people are keen to protect themselves from the downside of change. They would rather forgo having more of something than take the risk of having a lot less. To counteract this tendency you must persuade them that the benefits are worth the risk, and that the risk is not so great. Even the benefits are only small and incremental, or expected future benefits, they help to validate why coherence efforts are relevant and deserve higher priority.
9. **Communicate early, often and consistently.** Even when specifics have not been worked out yet, it's better to say “we don't know at the moment” than to say nothing at all. We build trust through consistent messaging. By communicating frequently on

working together better, UNDG leaders can exercise their power to set the agenda. Familiarity breeds attraction, liking and even “truth”. All other things being equal, the more a person is exposed to a concept, the more attractive it is. Provide regular updates. Once you have created momentum, don’t lose it. Keep up interest and involvement.

10. **Make it personal, manageable and relevant.** We get people to care by making it personal. People act when issues affect them personally. Describe coherence efforts in ways that are personally relevant, make a personal connection, get people personally involved, and offer personal rewards. Harness enlightened self-interest. Show people that they can make a difference, that there’s a reason for their efforts that means something in the context of their daily lives.
11. **Manage expectations.** When possible, set initial goals that the UNDG can meet with little difficulty. It generates a feeling of progress and success. Conversely, setting the bar too high encourages feelings of futility.
12. **Use interesting examples.** People overreact to sensational but unrepresentative information, so find compelling examples and share them widely.
13. **Quality and consistency over quantity.** Yes, it is still valid to say that you “can’t communicate too much.” However, you can communicate too much non-meaningful information. You can’t communicate too much significant and substantial information. Clarity and predictability are essential. Stakeholders want to understand exactly what will happen when they act, and that the results will be worth the risk. The more you can mitigate risk, the better. Use consistent structures. Consistency in look and feel, as well as alignment with theme of messaging helps audiences identify the source of the message.
14. **Use a variety of communication methods and vehicles.** Use multiple channels and formats for the same information. Don’t rely just on email or on formal meetings but use both of these and other means, e.g. lunch meetings. Repetition and variety are key in creating an effective communication program.
15. **Be willing to experiment with new ideas and methods.** Be flexible and adaptable in responding to varying conditions and circumstances. Be creative and innovative – support an environment that promotes ‘thinking out of the box’. Create an open environment that accepts, and learns from failure. Create an environment where the best talents of each individual are harnessed.
16. **Encourage discussion and dialogue.** Give stakeholders opportunities to look critically at the pros and cons of coherence and focus on what they would like to see more of. Based on evidence of success and progress, suggest conclusions on how to move forward. Change requires a conversation, not a monologue. Asking questions is essential and effective: a well-framed question can contain more persuasive information

than the answer to that question. Provide honest and open ways for staff and involved parties to share concerns, ask questions, and offer ideas. Make following up with answers and updates a top priority. The more people you involve in the process, the fewer you will have walking out the door or worse, staying and acting as internal “naysayers”. Solicit ideas that will strengthen what you want to do. Identify the people who you can come to for advice regarding new ideas.

17. **Give champions a megaphone.** Help governments, civil society representatives and staff who support greater coherence to speak out and get their message to all stakeholders. In most cases they are much more effective spokespeople for change than you are, because they will be considered more objective.
18. **Listen attentively to dissenters.** Expect the change to generate a corps of resisters and appreciate them. Listen to them and involve them by asking them for suggestions and solution proposals. Any group of stakeholders that perceives itself as losing out in a particular coherence initiative must come to regard the wishes of the majority as legitimate. You can only expect these stakeholders to do that if they have been made to feel that they have had a voice in the process. If you acknowledge that taking action carries the risk of conflict and that it's uncomfortable, you may be able to diminish stakeholders' anxieties. Acknowledge counter-arguments and be prepared to refute them.
19. **Talk about the negatives and the challenges in context.** Being purely positive will not be convincing, so acknowledge problems or obstacles, but put them in the context of continued forward movement.
20. **Embed coherence in other discussions.** It will be more effective to include arguments in favour of working together in communications on other, larger or more policy-oriented themes. E.g. the UN is working to achieve the Millennium Development Goals; enhancing coherence is one means that helps us reach that end.
21. **Use events to spread the word.** UN Day and other public or UNCT events provide opportunities for making presentations, distributing publications and holding one-on-one discussions. Plan to use each of these events to maximum advantage. Creating a sense of periodic events also helps stakeholders to measure progress and develop a sense of moving forward, and can serve as catalysts for decisions. When possible, distribute documents in advance and ensure that briefings are publicized as part of the meeting agendas. If you choose to deliver messages via meetings, make sure the meeting is effective by having a clear objectives and structure (e.g. agenda, facilitation, decision items), including communications objectives.
22. **Don't overwhelm people with information, tasks or the scope of the challenge.** Do not present problems in a framework that implies it's too big to solve. Instilling hope requires showing stakeholders that change is possible. Present it in manageable chunks. Inertia and feeling overwhelmed can be linked and neither inspires productive

engagement. Creating will is key. Ask people to do things that they can actually do. Requests that are simple, largely low risk and perceived to have the best chance of succeeding are most likely to draw action. Make one request, not many. Don't give staff too many actions to take: multiple choices often leads to no action at all. Once the first request catches on, move to the next step. It's more effective to take people through actions step by step than to overwhelm them. This means presenting coherence and working together as a set of small actions that feel easy and relevant.

23. **Don't be afraid to go into detail.** Research shows that a long message with many arguments is more effective than a short message—if the message is read. Leverage empirical data, research and external assessments whenever possible. This helps demonstrate that a number of reforms have been achieved and that these gains are not going to go away.
24. **Survey attitudes and knowledge regularly.** Surveying doesn't always have to be complex and time-consuming. For example, it can be helpful even to conduct a mini telephone survey of 10 stakeholders or staff members with different agencies at random to learn what they think about CER. Be sure to use this research to shape your communications. Polls are not just a research tool. By completing a survey and thinking about the issue, people begin the process of self-generated persuasion.
25. **Keep communicating about changes after they have been made.** Recognize and celebrate successful implementation.



## 7 Develop Your Key Messages

Convincing your UNCT to adopt new ways of planning, working together and delivering more requires a persuasive narrative that puts the changes into context and gives them meaning. Develop a storyline for CER that fits into the global context and integrates elements that make sense in your local context. You really do need to tell a story. It will help your stakeholders feel that they are important actors in giving that story a successful conclusion.

To be effective, your story needs to be clear, consistent, and credible. It needs to be easy to tell and to understand. It also needs to be true. And you have to repeat this story over and over again until every member of your team is capable of retelling this narrative in his or her own words. Remember that repetition is the mother of learning.

To ensure that your messages are compelling and persistent, make them simple, unexpected, concrete, and credible. Appeal to people's emotions, tell them stories and collect anecdotes that support your key messages.<sup>2</sup> Prior to final production, messages should be pretested with the target audiences (and in some cases with channel "gatekeepers") to assure public understanding and other intended responses. Ask people if they understand what you mean.

Simply parroting talking points is not enough. Memorization is not the same as internalization. You and your team need to believe the story and to be able to explain it to others in your own words. Be so familiar with what you are communicating that you can summarize it in a sentence or short paragraph. Explain the change in language people understand, in terms of how it will affect them. Anticipate how people will react and the questions they will raise.

Think of becoming more coherent as a long process which leaves lasting impressions with staff and stakeholders after the actual tasks have been completed. Keep this in mind when you communicate, and craft high-quality messages with attention to some of the 'softer' dimensions of people management, such as motivation and morale.

Both the channel (the conduit for sending your message to the chosen target audience) and the purpose of communicating environmental information influence message design. Information may be designed to convey new facts, alter attitudes, change behaviour, or encourage participation in decision-making. Some of these purposes overlap; often they are progressive. That is, for persuasion to work, people must first receive information, then understand it, believe it, agree with it, and then act upon it. Regardless of the purpose, messages must be developed with consideration of the desired outcome.

The UNDG has developed a set of **key messages** and **frequently asked questions** to help you through this process (available at [www.undg.org](http://www.undg.org)), but keep in mind that you should adapt and build on these messages to suit your local needs.

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<sup>2</sup> [Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die](#), by Chip Heath and Dan Heath

## 8 Communicating With Staff

Staff are your most important audience.

This concept often surprises managers. Surely the most important audience is the host government, or the donors, or the people benefitting from UN programmes? These stakeholders are certainly important, but ultimately no amount of communication will persuade these audiences unless it is supported by the words and deeds of UN staff. External communications will fail if you don't take care of internal communications. UNCT staff are the public faces of the United Nations and of their agencies, and their actions speak louder than words. Cynical employees who don't believe in what the UNCT is doing will kill the message.

External communications is about making promises. Internal communications is about making sure that those promises are kept. It is crucial to delivering the results agreed in your UN Development Assistance Framework. Your team cannot hope to implement the strategy it has on paper if your staff do not understand it. Consequently, any country team that wants to improve its impact and delivery rate needs to devote thought, energy, time, and resources to internal communications.

Strategically managed employee communications is a relatively new phenomenon. But it is essential in the current working environment. With the decline of permanent contracts and an increasing culture of mobility, staff are far less loyal to any one organization. The current generation does not have the same expectations of remaining with the same employer for life. Our work has become more complex and information-driven. Our clients are more demanding. Top-down, command-and-control management structures have stopped working.

UN organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of internal communications. The UN Secretariat, UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA now employ dedicated internal communications specialists. While it may not be realistic for a country team to do the same, you can certainly harness the skills of your UN Communications Group to communicate with your staff.

Internal communications can shape and improve a wide range of management and human resources tools. It can help to convey news and success stories, publicize activities, report on outcomes, provide career guidance, and share the kind of social information that binds the UNCT together like a family. It can connect staff to stakeholders, explain goals, strategies and expectations, and help people share knowledge and understand their roles and benefits. By feeding the grapevine with accurate information, it can also help to shape informal conversations.

Making the effort to communicate with staff pays off in many ways. Done well, it increases employee satisfaction, which in turn increases the satisfaction of the people the UN serves, which in turn can increase the impact of programmes. It saves you the cost and time of hiring

new staff as often, increases the contribution of individual employees and helps you to get more value out of the salaries you pay.

With direction from the Resident Coordinator and heads of agencies, your UN Communications Group should manage and conduct communications with UNCT staff. This requires the UNCG to directly engage with staff, create products for an internal audience and—perhaps most importantly—help managers to communicate with staff.

Effective communication with UN Country Team staff should pursue three broad objectives, which are critical for success:

1. Staff represent the UNCT to external stakeholders in a way that is consistent with the ideals, principles and visions of the UN. They project an image of the UN as it should be. They speak with pride and confidence about the work of the organization. Their behaviour shows pride in their organization. They are ambassadors for multilateral approaches, international cooperation and mutual accountability. Rather than covering the mistakes, failures or breaches of ethics and wrongdoing of UN staff, the media cover the challenges the UN system faces and the work we all do to overcome it.
2. UNCT staff perform quality work that satisfies the needs of your stakeholders. They deliver coherently, effectively and efficiently.
3. Talented, hardworking staff stay with the UNCT or at least the UN system. They do not quit and go to work somewhere they think is better. This is crucial to avoid the high turnover or “churn” of staff that will undermine your ability to execute strategies and programmes.

## 8.1 Understanding Employees

Managers commonly fail to understand how much they need to do to reach and motivate their staff. Just because a message has been put on the intranet or in the UNCT newsletter does not mean that it has been communicated. Employees often do not bother to read these products, and even if they read them, they may forget the information or interpret it differently than management intends. You have to communicate through multiple channels to reach your staff, and as with other forms of communication, you need to give them a vision and a narrative that puts their work into a meaningful context.

You can't buy love. A salary is rarely sufficient motivation for most employees to deliver good results, particularly in the UN system. They need to understand where the country team and the UN system are headed and why. They also want to feel that they are making a difference, helping people in need and providing a valuable service. This creates a special challenge for UNCT managers. Because many UN staff are not primarily motivated by money, they more easily become disappointed, disillusioned, or cynical.

Building a committed team requires fostering trust, a sense of involvement in an effort that matters and an understanding of each team member's role. You have to inspire your people to be proud to work for the United Nations.

Research suggests that employees who feel their organization keeps them informed about matters that affect them are far less likely to leave.

Your internal communications strategy should start with an effort to understand the needs, hopes and concerns of your country team's staff. This can be done through a formal survey, focus group sessions, interviews, and also informally on an ongoing basis. However, to ensure that you can evaluate progress with your internal communications strategy, you should begin with a formal survey to establish a baseline for attitudes and segment your staff to some extent into groups who are more or less supportive of CER—and focus on those you can actually persuade, those who are ready to act.

Aside from survey questions about specific CER initiatives, consider asking your staff some of the following questions to encourage them to learn about the UN system and UNCT. The [CER FAQ](#) provides many more focused suggestions.

1. In what year was the UNCT established?
2. What is the UNCT's vision, mission and/or values?
3. Who are our top three competitors for providing support to countries?
4. What are our key UNDAF or common programming tool outcomes?
5. What are the UNCT's main strategic goals for this year?
6. Name some of the trends or changes that the UN system and the international aid architecture are expected to go through in the coming year.
7. What are the UNCT's most valuable, effective, or impactful programmes and services?
8. When was the last time you received training?
9. When was the last time your manager gave you feedback on your performance?
10. When was the last time you discussed your career goals with your manager?
11. When was the last time the UNCT shared news of its latest developments with you?
12. When was the last time you received any communication from the RC or your head of agency?
13. What information do you need to work productively?

Remember: organizations that consider their employees to be their greatest assets are the ones that ultimately succeed. Like development, internal communications requires a long term strategy. It takes time and effort to create a deep, genuine connection with your staff. You can't do it in a few weeks or months.

## 8.2 Communicating About CER With UNCT Staff

The mechanics of communicating with staff are relatively mundane: town hall meetings, memos, newsletters, emails, briefings, phone calls, face-to-face and one-on-one meetings, and informal conversations. The interesting and challenging part is how you use and organize these methods and opportunities. That's what this section is about.

Take a long, hard look at the institutional culture of your country team. What are its values? How is its spirit? How can you inspire it to be better? What are your staff thinking about? Are they happy? Trusting or suspicious? Do they have fun doing their jobs? Do they support the management team, or are they defensive and argumentative?

Statements from staff such as “that’s not how we do it”, “that’s not our policy”, “it’s not my job”, “I don’t have the authority to do that”, “I’m not growing”, “I don’t feel that I’m really making a difference,” and “the UN doesn’t care about me” are signs that you need to engineer a culture shift.

Institutional culture is a reflection of your organization’s leadership, philosophy, history, and shared beliefs and values. UNCT members spend much of their waking lives at work. It is an important part of their identities. Their colleagues are probably an important part of their social circle or extended family. That culture inescapably effects whether staff support or oppose change.

Humans are “tribal”, and UN staff tend to have a “tribal” identification with their particular organization. Actions that ask staff to separate from their “tribe” seem scary unless they also help the individuals identify with a new UN “tribe”, and that tribe seems safe and strong. Psychologically and sociologically, CER is a process of persuading UN staff to accept that they belong not only to their agency, but also to the bigger family of UN staff.

To make your UNCT coherent, effective and efficient, you have to convince people to deliver what you promise. CER is an institutional journey, but it is also a personal journey for staff. CER is ultimately about changing the culture of your country team.

Change is the only constant. It is also the most risky activity that leaders can engage in. To make your team more coherent, you must win their hearts and minds. You must get them to support change or better yet, as Gandhi so aptly put it, to *be the change*. The UN Country Team’s new future – the “where to” – must be clear and exciting to everyone. To inspire genuine conviction, the programme’s rationale and goal must withstand the toughest scrutiny from the most cynical observer right from the start.

Whether UNCT staff are thinking as individuals, agency staff or as a team, they need to know how their work will change, what the UNCT expects of them during the coherence process, how they will be evaluated, and what the consequences of success or failure will be. Staff can’t change what they don’t understand. People are more likely to change if they understand how they are being asked to change, get support and are acknowledged for changing.

To do this you must involve people in the coherence process, build their commitment to the outcomes and support their ability to deal with new ways of working. Establish a sense of urgency, make a compelling case to your staff, and create a vision for where the country team is going and why. Focus your messages around better serving the people and country, and how working together and delivering better is essential to ensuring the future relevance of the UN system. Make sure the UNCT understands the political and economic situation of the UN system and the global shifts that are driving these changes.

Communicate the case for action, the vision, and the rationale. You must communicate that vision every day, both in writing and face-to-face. More than that, you need to live the vision and show that you believe in it through your behaviour. You need to engineer a change in perceptions that supports a new strategic vision in which the pieces of the UN system work together in an integrated, strategic fashion. Over time, UN system staff should see themselves increasingly as part of the United Nations, in addition to their identities as staff of individual agencies.

Staff must be persuaded of the “why” of working together, and the “why now”. You have to make the benefits of success and the penalties of failure painfully obvious. Never assume that because you “get it”, they “get it.” Everyone has a different understanding and perspective. Use simple language but don’t talk down to people.

*“If people from the top to the bottom of your organization don’t understand your strategy, then you don’t have one. You may have a mission, a vision, or a business plan, but without alignment and understanding across levels, no one can implement a business strategy.”*

*—Dr. Daniel Denison, professor of management and organization, International Institute for Management and Development*

Make the benefits and vision clear to everyone. As in any effort to persuade, you must regularly remind staff how they stand to benefit. The staff members must understand the personal benefits of working together. Leadership must have credible answers to the natural question “what’s in it for me?”

Involve UNCT staff in the coherence process. People react to what they see around them. Don’t let them remain bystanders or spectators. Effective communications for coherence involves staff in the improvement process and leverages learning opportunities to ensure that they have the knowledge to move forward. At the same time, it serves to manage expectations. Get staff involved in the process. Give people a role to play, no matter how small, because that infuses them with a vested interest in having the effort succeed. Empower them to implement change. Let them innovate and try new things.

Country Team staff want to be updated on a regular basis and will be particularly interested in the impact an activity is going to have on their work. They like to receive immediate information on which particular activities are going to take place; they want to be consulted in the process; and they want to be able to see and comment on the outcomes.

The UN Communications Group should correspond directly with all UN staff on information or communication issues related to CER. Documentation such as newsletters, reports and other informational materials should be circulated from the UNCG or Resident Coordinator's Office to each UNCG member who then takes responsibility for disseminating it to the staff of their agency.

Be prepared to answer questions. Based on the material provided by the UN Development Group and DOCO, develop talking points and a Q&A so that everyone can answer questions such as the following:

- Why do we need to change?
- Where is the UNCT going?
- Why do I have to change what I'm doing?
- What exactly do you want me to do, and how?
- How will we get there?
- What will we look like if we're successful?
- What are the benefits for *me*?

The objectives for your communications with staff should include:

- Staff understand and support the rationale for CER
- Staff understand the principles, action plan and timeline for CER
- Staff understand possible implications for them as individuals
- Staff know what to do

While you will encounter political and personal resistance to elements of CER, experience shows that the biggest obstacle to change is simply a lack of clear understanding and information about what to do and how to do it. Make it easy for people to know what to do.

### **8.3 Managers as Communicators**

Communications cannot simply be delegated to the UNCG, particularly for something as sensitive as a change management initiative. Leaders must communicate to staff about operations and objectives. Managers at all levels of the country team must communicate proactively and consistently.

Change management requires strong people skills. It requires managers to be willing to listen actively, restate and reflect. Managers must seek clarifications without interrogating, draw out hesitant speakers who may need answers to questions, and shape the direction of discussions. They must also work at planting and cultivating ideas. To be true change agents, your leaders must reconcile conflicts between often strongly differing points of view, with all the charm and courtesy they can muster. All of this is communications work.

Put your internal communications efforts on the agenda for management meetings. Make sure managers understand the importance of internal communications, and that they have a role to play in promoting new ways of working.

The Resident Coordinator and Heads of Agencies are crucial role models for the rest of the team. They have to “walk it like they talk it” and be the change. Senior management’s task is to present the vision, paint the big picture and explain the conditions that drive decisions. The RC must seize this leadership role and regularly outline the strategic direction for the country team at every opportunity. Heads of Agencies should reinforce that vision and proactively take responsibility for ensuring that their staff are regularly briefed and kept informed about developments in the CER process. When managers live and communicate the culture of coherence every day, they provide strong role models, and they prove that management believes that people are the true value of the UN system.

Middle managers and immediate supervisors are also important conduits of information, particularly for the detailed operational aspects of working together and delivering better. The team leaders need to provide them with the information to discuss coherence with their staff and put it into a meaningful context for their work. Make sure that all levels of management understand their role. Communications specialists may need to remind managers that it’s normal to have incomplete information during a change process, and that staff understand this. Help your managers accept that it’s okay to say “I don’t know”, as long as you make a commitment to keep staff informed.

When a culture of coherence is reinforced every day through modelling, training and communication, your staff will become role models too.

Select a few talented communicators from each level and coach them to be change champions, empowered to speak regularly with staff, listen to their concerns, and encourage them. A full team talking about CER to all of their colleagues and neighbors is a powerful network of communicators.

### **8.3.1 Talking to Managers About Communications**

Managers may not innately recognize why communication is so important. Talk about issues from their perspective Put yourself in management's shoes. Find out what they are reading. Learn which organizations or other managers they admire. By knowing their patterns of behaviour, you show that you are knowledgeable. Ask operational decision-making questions, not just communication questions. Ask managers to talk you through a key decision they had to make, and the steps in their thinking. Ask open-ended, managerially-relevant questions: “why was this done?”, “Whose decision was it?”, “How do you see yourself running the office day-to-day?”, and so on. Above all, provide sound managerial reasons for communicating, rather than just communications as an end in itself.

Why should a manager choose to communicate more than they already are? You need to make the case. Give them options so they can choose how they would rather do it. Managers’ peers

in similar organizations may have a different (more proactive) approach to communications. Try getting that peer manager to talk to your manager about the merits of communications. If you can help just one manager to be a better communicator, they will set an example and magnify the impact of your communications work.

#### **8.4 Face-to-Face and Word-of-Mouth Communications**

In our rush to produce communications “products” we tend to forget about the most effective means available to convey thoughts, information and opinions: talking to people. This sounds obvious, but many teams fail to think about face-to-face communications in a systematic way beyond organizing staff meetings. Don’t make this mistake. Motivational information is best conveyed in person. Organize your managers and change agents to talk to their colleagues and subordinates. Create events and opportunities for people to talk about the changes that the UNCT is going through. Maximize face-to-face communication and build a sense of community and team spirit.

Face to face communications build trust, because they bring a personal touch and a degree of emotional connection that other forms of communications, even video, can only attempt to capture. Go and talk to people regularly. Build relationships and deliver feedback to management. Tell your UNCT staff a story that makes their conversations more interesting.

Use face-to-face communications to reward team members’ accomplishments and recognize hard workers, and also to explain bad news. Make your UNCT meetings bright, lively and bigger than life. Make them fun, social occasions. Get your senior leaders up in front of the team, and coach them to speak from the heart.

Make an effort to coordinate and influence word of mouth, and make it part of your communications plan. In our current age of information overload, it remains one of the most trusted means of communication. Interpersonal conversations are arguably the most powerful way that people develop attitudes about CER. We rely on our friends and colleagues, those we know and respect, to provide us with good information. Modern media tools still haven’t changed the way our brains are wired. But how do you control inaccurate and divergent conversations? You don’t. You have to light the fire of inspiration and ideas, and then let go. Feed the grapevine by providing accurate information and refuting rumours with facts. Keep a balance of conveying information while listening and getting feedback.

Practice “Management by Wandering Around” (MBWA), an approach pioneered by Hewlett-Packard that encourages managers to get out of their offices and converse with employees informally in small groups or one-on-one, in less intimidating contexts. Consider taking your meals with the staff – people tend to talk more freely while they are eating and drinking.

Coordination specialists should also practice MBWA across the country team. You cannot expect agency staff to acquire enthusiasm for coordination or coherence if you spend all your time sitting in the RC Office. Get out and engage with staff from across the country team on a regular basis. It’s an excellent way to build relationships and regularly reinforce messages

through relatively brief encounters. And it helps staff to feel that you care about their role in working as a team. Do it with sincerity.

Connecting creates relationships and a sense of togetherness. People must be encouraged to get out of their silos and talk to each other. Ample research indicates that corroboration and group support—seeing and hearing that others have the same view—breeds more intense commitment. Asking people how they feel about their job and working together and then sincerely acknowledging the response can double the rate of compliance with subsequent requests.

Encourage self-persuasion. Hold interactive discussions among team members, in which staff take on the role of advocates for working together and the group has a debate about it. These are ideal for retreats. Instead of a lecture, get the group to spend the time persuading themselves in a group discussion. Begin with a short introduction by the leader on the issue, then enlist help of members by asking if people like them could be persuaded to participate. Self-generated persuasion—whether induced by group discussion, by getting someone to role-play an opponent's position, or by asking a person to imagine adopting a course of action—is one of the most effective persuasion tactics ever identified.

Bring your PowerPoint presentations to life with photos, charts, graphics and other visual images that support what the speaker is saying. Don't fill them with text that competes with the speaker for attention. Support the presentation with a quick outline of what the speaker is saying, and a more detailed handout of their remarks.

Options for face-to-face meetings can include:

- “town hall” meetings
- large group meetings
- agency staff meetings
- public speeches by the RC and senior officials
- managers’ meetings
- site and office visits
- “road shows” to agency offices
- breakfast/lunch sessions
- one-on-one meetings
- task team meetings
- briefings
- organized peer discussions
- Q&A sessions
- 60-second pitches

## **8.5 Vehicles for Communicating With Staff**

The experiences of successful UN Country Teams suggest that aside from meetings and in-person briefings, staff prefer to get information from a regular online and email newsletter and via the website or intranet. Think about the different types of staff that you have, and match the

vehicle to your target group. For example, drivers may find audiotapes or CDs better for consuming information than printed materials.

**Common Visual Identity and Concept:** This is what the private sector calls a brand. Within the parameters agreed by the UN Communications Group, you can develop a common UN Country Team identity for both internal and external use. Effective use of this common UN “brand” will create awareness and consistency for the coherence process and the UN’s mission and values. It will sustain a positive culture of change and coherence that reflects both the UN’s proud history and the potential of its future. It will also drive change and help you to attract and retain talented staff.

**Conference calls:** These are useful for delivering important messages if you can’t easily gather everyone together for a meeting. Conference calls provide more emotional content than print and allows for dialogue. Keep the script light and conversational. Always follow up conference calls with an email that recaps the highlights of the call, important information for people to remember, and any actions for follow-up.

**Video:** Multimedia tends to increase people’s ability to retain messages, particularly when it supplements face-to-face interaction and printed material. It’s the next-best thing to face to face for communicating about coherence. But keep in mind that good video is very labour-intensive, so use it sparingly for maximum impact.

**Newsletters:** A regular UNCT newsletter can be useful for building a sense of community, but don’t rely on it as your sole source for conveying information. Many employees and particularly managers do not bother to read newsletters. If done well, they have the added benefit of reaching both internal and external audiences. Make them fun with facts, jokes, quizzes and amusing stories. Include a variety of information, both light and heavy. Feature different voices and people. Newsletters are nice, but don’t let producing a beautiful newsletter consume so much of your time that you neglect other vehicles.

**Printed materials:** In general, printed materials are best for longer stories, detailed analysis and progress reports. Fact sheets and brochures, if concise and well-designed, are useful tools for reaching staff and other stakeholders. They have the advantage of being portable, permanent, convenient, authoritative, and accessible. Printed information gets information across at the user’s convenience, and can be easily shared with others, such as family members. It can be studied at length and kept as a reference. That said, print is also passive and pushed to the consumer—there is no opportunity to ask questions for clarification. Be creative with your printed products: they can also include regular status reports, compelling images or pocket cards with key messages. You may find it useful to circulate a set of bullet points each week or month that capture the latest developments and key messages.

**Email:** Email is good for providing tips, progress reports, announcements, time-sensitive updates, and policies, but keep your messages short. More than one screen of information in an

email is too much. Email is not suitable for conveying extensive amounts of information, detailed training, important strategic information, really bad news, really good news, or anything else of real substance. It can be used to *support* other vehicles for these types of information, but it shouldn't be the sole source. Don't send anything sensitive via email.

**Activities:** Consider organizing contests or awarding prizes to encourage coherent working practices and active communication. Try organizing a “knowledge fair” where agencies get together and exchange information on what they know and do. Hold a brainstorming session with a group of UNCT members to think about ways of reaching out to the whole team.

**Training:** Learning activities are particularly important for helping staff develop the ability to do things in new ways. Staff can't follow good practices if they don't know how. Proper training is especially crucial for new recruits. Employees with low morale often feel as though they are not getting the feedback and coaching they need to grow. Training shows staff that the UN is dedicated to their development and growth, makes their workplace more appealing, and demonstrates that the UNCT is a highly skilled, high-value organization. Hire for attitude and train for skills. Use training to embed the UN's values in your people. Train staff as though each of them will be representing the United Nations as a spokesperson. Help them become polished and knowledgeable about the organization and what it is doing in your country.

### Matching Messages With Effective Vehicles<sup>3</sup>

Substance of Communication	Communication Vehicles							
	UNCT Meeting	Video Conference	Conference Call	Print Piece or Letter	Newsletter	Email	Intranet	One-on-One
Mission, Vision and Values	1	1		2	2	2	2	2
Motivational Information	1	1					2	2
Strategic Information	1	1		2	2		2	2
Recognizing People	1	1		2	2	2	2	1
UN or UNCT News	1	1			1		1	
Financial Information				1			2	
Tactical Plans				1		1	1	
Detailed Training							1	
Management Directives	1		1	2	2		2	2

1 – Primary Communication Vehicle

2 – Secondary Communication Vehicle

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from *Light Their Fire: Using Internal Marketing to Ignite Employee Performance and Wow Your Customers* by Susan Drake, et al.

*“What I hear, I forget. What I see, I remember. What I do, I understand.”*

—Confucius

## 8.6 Communicating About Capacity Assessments

A UNCT capacity assessment may well be one of the most stressful steps in the coherence process, because it cuts to the heart of people’s uncertainties about their job security, relevance and ability to adapt. It’s scary. Start communications to staff early, before the assessment begins. Tell staff first, before external stakeholders. Don’t wait for all the facts, just tell them what you know so far.

Explain to all staff why you are doing a capacity assessment. Make the case for why the assessment is being done, and be transparent and honest about its potential implications for the team. This is key to avoiding tension and misunderstandings. After laying out the vision and strategy, it’s best to brief staff in smaller groups by categories (drivers, associates, programme staff, etc.). Try to give people a proactive role in the process so that they feel like active participants rather than helpless subjects of a process that is beyond their control.

Decide from the outset which reports and documents will be made public and which will not. Keeping documents secret can generate mistrust, and remember that information tends to leak and feed the rumour-mill. It’s best to anticipate the likely outcomes of the assessment and plan in advance how you will explain them to the team. Deal with rumours by identifying them and responding.

Develop a FAQ or brief to explain the capacity assessment, and provide ample opportunities for them to ask questions. For example, in Tanzania the Resident Coordinator and Heads of Agencies held several briefing sessions with staff across agencies to discuss the results of the assessment in more detail and help them understand that before any changes took place, the team would have to develop a detailed strategy on how to implement the shift in focus. Only after the strategy was complete would it be possible to determine how the changes would impact staffing. The team leaders also made it clear that staff would be consulted during this process.

If the capacity assessment will have negative consequences for some staff, be honest about this. Staff do not need to like what they hear, they only need to understand it and believe that the UNCT management was candid and honest with them. Bad news should always be delivered face-to-face, or at worst over the phone. Don’t use email for bad or negative news, or if the message is complex and could be easily misunderstood, or if you need group dynamics. Don’t make promises you can’t keep.

Orient your communications around the capacity assessment to build trust, a commitment to goals, and a focus on the tasks that need to be performed. Be candid and thorough. Describe

the alternatives that you explored. Explain the decisions you made, how you made them, who made them, and whether the process was difficult.

Make it clear to everyone how the capacity assessment results are aligned with the mission and values of the UNCT, how it affects the team, and what each member needs to do.

Toolkit components on the capacity assessment provide more tips. Be sure to include communications elements throughout the process.

## 8.7 More Internal Communications Tips

1. **Pay attention to the human dimension.** Managers often like to talk about how important their people are, but when they get to the business of change, they tend to focus too much on the mechanics and policies, and not enough on the thoughts, attitudes and behaviour of the people that they need to change. These “soft” human and issues are often harder to deal with than systems—which is all the more reason to give them the attention they deserve.
2. **Emotional content matters.** Address beliefs and behaviours directly and reinforce what views and actions are desirable. Pay attention to how people feel about things. Address morale issues to increase motivation. Share knowledge so people care. Make them care by reflecting their values, and the values of the UN. Wrap those values in strong, empowering emotions. Evoke hope, empowerment, accomplishment and a sense of progress—that together you are making things better. Persuasion is about differentiation from the past. Persuasion promotes understanding; understanding breeds acceptance; acceptance leads to action. UN system staff have a *duty* as international civil servants to make the UN as effective as possible and to implement the guidance given to them by the member states.
3. **Be open and honest, and keep people informed.** If staff they are not kept well informed of the objectives and progress, there is a much greater risk that you will face problems during the course of the improvement process. In fact, in many cases where conflicts arise, it is not because of the actual problem, but because people involved had different expectations and were surprised by the process (or lack thereof) and decisions made, or felt that they were not given a say in the process. Consultation can work wonders. Seek out rumours and squelch them with facts.
4. **Time requests for action in waves.** Manageable chunks of things to do are much more palatable than a confusing, sweeping set of changes. Give your team a clear sense of the steps and benchmarks of working together more coherently, and let them know what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.
5. **Recruit champions and use social proof.** People are heavily influenced by the views and actions of their peers. Seeing colleagues they respect doing something makes it acceptable and worth doing themselves. Social proof is most effective when people are

unsure and situations are ambiguous. Recruit Coherence Champions from various levels of your country team – people who are articulate, energetic, respected and strongly supportive of change. Coach them, provide them with talking points and materials, and organize them to talk to their colleagues on a regular basis. Keep them informed every step of the way. Once you can get a few champions to act, others will follow.

6. **Accentuate the positive.** People respond much better to positive and empowering messages (“by working together we can do more to reduce poverty”) than to negative frames (“the UN will become irrelevant if we don’t reform”). You will need to combat waning enthusiasm and burnout, counter gloom and doom scenarios, blaming and a sense of futility. Qualifying the end goal and benefits is more motivating than dramatizing worst-case scenarios that don’t always pan out and can damage the credibility of reform efforts. Celebrate successes and efforts. Remind people there is something they care about and that they can do something about it. This doesn’t mean that we ignore or gloss over problems and failures. Instead, we acknowledge the challenges and put them in the context of continued progress, while managing expectations to keep them realistic.
7. **Encourage a culture of change and coherence.** Embed the mission, vision and values in every interaction with employees. Give people permission to make mistakes and try new things. Let them know the strategic direction, but avoid always telling them how to get there. As long as you get the results you want, give people the flexibility to do it their way. Use communications to inspire employees to take risks, make suggestions, support others, motivate their colleagues, enjoy work, build trust, forge friendships with development partners, and... smile.
8. **Make it a dialogue, not a lecture.** When you communicate about coherence, make sure it is two-way communication, in which staff have the opportunity to ask questions whenever they need to and provide feedback on the process. Dialogue helps to make success more desirable. Organize abundant opportunities for an exchange of information and a chance for staff to fully engage and participate in debates and discussions. Secure a strong commitment from the staff associations.
9. **Be visible during the process.** If staff don’t see senior management regularly, they may wonder what secret plans are being cooked up. You can’t lead if you’re hiding. Get out there and show the country team that you are committed to working with them through these changes.
10. **Play multiple roles.** Be a *counsellor*, who prepares team members on-on-one for change and equips them to enact it at their level. Be an *interpreter*, who helps people understand what coherence means for them day to day. Play *facilitator*, establishing channels and forums to get information out. Be a *cheerleader*, who offers rewards and recognitions. Act as a *reporter*, who creates benchmarks by informing staff about whether innovative approaches are working. Be an *analyst*, who measures and assesses the impact of greater coherence, effectiveness and efficiency.



11. **Concentrate dispersed knowledge.** Start and maintain an issues logbook. Let anyone go anywhere and talk to anyone about anything. Keep the communications barriers low, widely spaced, and easily hurdled. Initially, if things look chaotic, relax—they are.
12. **Broadly share praise and rewards.** Change is difficult. Don't forget to say thank you on a regularly basis. Repeatedly reward and recognize individuals for taking actions that enhance team effectiveness. Make them sincere and timely. Name names and use photos. Make people feel like they're part of a winning team. When the UN team delivers, we all win. Remind people again and again of the UN's successes. To motivate people, we need to show them the small wins they are making and help them recognize that those successes are moving them closer to solving bigger problems. Connect those successes back to the UN's core values on development. Show that successes in working together are symbols that the UN's values are being upheld. Conversely, penalizing, removing or sidelining people who block necessary changes also sends a strong signal of commitment—but be careful how you do this. Praise in public, coach in private.
13. **Prepare to fight reform fatigue.** At some point in the coherence process, staff will lose enthusiasm. Efforts will flag. You need to fight that sense of helplessness and lost inertia by giving staff the tools they need to move forward and conveying the impression that the momentum behind coherence is unstoppable. Expect that there will be fear of the unknown, and respond to it. Don't be afraid to talk about problems, but put them a context that helps people understand that it's normal to encounter problems when trying new things.
14. **Build bridges between agencies.** Every UNCT has agencies that don't entirely get along, because they have different mandates and perspectives, or because their managers have personality conflicts, or because of competition for funding and attention. Remind agency staff that they are paid and mandated by member states to work together for common goals. Build bridges between agencies through social events, personal relationships and sharing information. Celebrate the diversity of the UNCT.
15. **Be open and honest when communicating bad news.** Do it in person. Do it quickly, and then focus on the future. Prepare scripted talking points or circulate a printed statement to support your remarks. Describe the news in a clear and straightforward manner. Provide as many facts as possible without going into excessive detail. Explain when something will happen, how each group of staff will be affected, and what the next steps are. Explain why the changes are happening, who made the decisions, and the process that was followed. The most important question to answer for each staff member is "what will happen to me?" The second is "how does this strengthen the country team?" If you can openly and honestly explain what is going to happen, your staff will respect your candour and potentially support the changes, because you have treated them like adults.

16. **When in doubt, over-communicate.** It keeps the truth up-to-date, counteracts unreliable messages, changes culture faster, reduces fear, counteracts scepticism and mistrust, and corrects ambiguity and uncertainty. Repetition helps people to understand what they are supposed to do, and it reinforces the emotional need to bond and feel part of a group.

## 9 Communicating with the host government

When communicating with the host government it is important to understand that under the aid effectiveness agenda, the Government is formally expected to be the main driver for coherence within the context of the aid effectiveness agenda. National ownership is a basic condition for CER and effective aid, so it is crucial to ensure that all relevant government actors are engaged and informed in the change management process.

While most governments will not need to know about the minutiae of CER, enlisting the support of civil servants and politicians does require presenting a compelling case. The Government will presumably want to see the UN deliver more effective and efficient support, but this does not guarantee that it will be supportive of coherence at the outset, and it falls to the country team--particularly the RC--to make the benefits of a more coherent, effective and relevant UN system clear to Government interlocutors. If the Government concludes that coherence is donor-driven, focused on cost-cutting or rationalization, it is unlikely to be supportive, so your dialogue must focus on how Coherence will increase national ownership, improve delivery, reduce transaction costs, and so on.

Communicating with the Government also requires cultural sensitivity. Respecting the specific local culture means adapting the type, channels and content of communication to the local environment. For example, in some countries it may imply sharing all publications with the government; in other cases it may suggest opting for joint public appearances.

Regardless of the country situation, it's important to ensure that the team's senior managers are conscious of their responsibility to communicate regularly, persuasively and consistently with the Government about coherence. Assess the communications needs of your Government stakeholders and develop a plan for how you will reach them and persuade them.

### 9.1 Objectives

Communications with the host government about CER should have three objectives:

1. Government asks the UNCT to make an effort to achieve greater coherence, effectiveness and relevance.
2. Government actively supports CER efforts and pushes the UNCT to ensure that coherence leads to benefits for the host country.
3. If appropriate, Government representatives are part of a joint group established to oversee CER efforts and UN programming.

### 9.2 Situation Analysis

Your communications and interactions with the government should be based on a clear understanding of the Government's attitudes and interests regarding CER.

Governments will have different perspectives on CER depending on a range of factors such as the country's general attitude to the UN, its political culture, the views of its neighbours and other developing countries, the structure of development assistance provided to the country, the presence of other actors, the UNCT's past performance, and so on.

Further complicating communications, different ministries (or officials) may have divergent views on coherence. For example, the finance or planning ministry and the head of government may be supportive, while line ministries may have concerns about the impact of a more coherent UN on their relationships with the UN organization(s) they usually work most closely with.

Your communications with the government must take into account these differences and incorporate a plan for addressing them.

Here are five possible scenarios for the Government's attitudes to CER, and how you might respond to them.

1. The Government is aware of CER initiatives, supports the concept of a more coherent UNCT and is prepared to actively support the process. In this case the task of communicating with Government stakeholders is relatively easy—but still essential—and can focus on two tasks: (i) providing timely and accurate information about progress and (ii) providing encouragement and opportunities for the Government to show leadership in the process and exert influence that drives the UNCT to become more coherent.
2. The Government is aware of CER and supportive in principle but unwilling to invest energy in supporting it. In this case the chief tasks are to: (i) provide information and progress reports to sustain government interest and (ii) seek out Government representatives who are more supportive and persuade them to play more active roles as needed by the UNCT. This will require setting out the benefits for these stakeholders of committing time and energy to strengthening the UN system.
3. The Government is aware of CER. Some ministries are supportive, but others are opposed or have reservations. (It is often the case that the central ministries like coherence, while line ministries do not see immediate benefits.) Beyond providing information, the UNCT must focus on enlisting the supportive ministries and officials, and working together with them to persuade more reluctant ministries as needed. You will probably need to address different levels of information, understanding and attitudes about CER. While most UNCT communications can focus on the supportive stakeholders, you will also need to ensure that others do not actively oppose CER or seek to divide the UNCT with divergent priorities. Joint meetings, information sessions and targeted communications that address concerns and establish the benefits will help. In general, this scenario will require repeated, vigorous engagement by the RC, ideally together with agency representatives. It will be crucial for the UN to speak with a

coherent voice, and for agency heads to be consistent with the RC in their advocacy for CER. Civil Society stakeholders may also be helpful in persuading ministerial counterparts of the virtues of a more coherent UN presence.

4. The Government does not have a clear understanding CER. In this scenario you must first inform and educate Government partners about coherence and clearly set out the benefits for all affected ministries. While this requires more work and time to lay the foundations, with a Government in this situation you have the advantage of not having to combat unrealistic expectations or misconceptions about coherence. It is therefore essential that you begin the dialogue with clear, consistent and compelling messages that create a framework for subsequent discussions and a productive relationship that furthers coherence. Be careful to tailor your presentations and information products to the Government's level of knowledge and interest, and always set out the benefits from the Government's perspective.
5. The Government is opposed to CER. In this case the communications challenge may be insurmountable. Analyze the reasons for the Government's opposition and see if its resistance is based on misconceptions, unrelated political factors or genuine rejection of coherence for substantive reasons. If opposition is based on misunderstandings, try to correct them with facts and persuasion. If the opposition is due to unrelated issues, see if you can de-link your efforts from them. If the Government objects to the substance of CER, see if there are components of working together more effectively that the Government does not object to, and focus both work and communications on these. Ultimately, CER cannot move forward unless the Government is at least passively supportive, and if you cannot find avenues for persuading the Government, you may have to postpone most CER efforts until the Government's stance or political situation changes, ideally while developing a body of evidence that illustrates the benefits of more coherent, effective and relevant operations.

### **9.3 Messaging**

The UNCT needs to clearly and persuasively articulate its vision and role in the country, ensure that the Government shares that understanding, and manage expectations (e.g. UN is not a donor). The Government must be persuaded to support CER efforts, ideally actively, but at least passively. The UNCT must persuasively explain the short, medium and long-term objectives of CER, as well as the expected benefits for the Government and the population.

It is critical to ensure that all members of the country team are on-message when talking to Government interlocutors about CER. This can be achieved through a combination of the work described under the previous section on communications with staff, and by regularly agreeing on and circulating targeted messages for Government stakeholders.

Support for consistent messages can be sustained by regularly convening meetings with the UN representatives who meet with the Government to discuss and debrief on how their conversations are going. Are ministries responding consistently? Are there concerns or information gaps that need to be addressed? By working these considerations into your joint communication strategy, it's possible to head off potential problems.

The UNDG has an agreed set of standard messages about CER for programme country governments. Use these as a basis for developing customized messages that suit your reform plans and your audience.

## **9.4 Recommended Communications Channels, Products and Activities**

The UNCT should regularly share relevant information on the change process with Government stakeholders, without burdening them with excessive reporting. The following are suggestions on means and tools to use in communicating with the government. Many of these are drawn from successful practices used by the Delivering as One pilots and self-starters.

### **Advocacy and Joint Events**

- Direct Government advocacy and discussions by the RC, heads of agencies and RC Office staff, including regular visits to central and line ministries and local governments, as well as inviting key ministers and civil servants to UN-hosted events.
- Leverage visits of senior officials to give more visibility to coherence efforts and demonstrate system-wide support for the effort.
- Use the joint steering committee or other governance mechanism to ensure coherent messaging.
- Highlight cooperation between the UN and the Government by promoting joint public appearances, and joint meetings that involve multiple agencies. Show the government that the UN team is working together.
- Workshop for Government communications officers to introduce them to CER and help them understand why it matters.
- Regular consultative meetings with Government communications officers.
- Joint retreat with Government partners to agree on UNDAF and common programming document.
- RC speech to the government upon signing of UNDAF or common programming tool.
- Piggy-back coherence discussions on UN/Government seminars and conferences on key developmental issues.
- Occasional surveys of key Government interlocutors to ensure necessary levels of awareness and support.
- Make maximum use of senior National Officers who know the government structure and have personal contacts they can use for advocacy.

### **Products**

- Produce and distribute a concise CER information kit.
- Publication and dissemination of CER progress reports, final report and other important documents. Share project briefs for every project.
- Develop customized presentations for use with Government stakeholders. This may require different presentations or elements for different ministries/levels of government.
- Use Government communication tools/newsletter.
- Piggy-back coherence information on UN agency flagship publications.
- When new information material relating to the coherence process is published, the communications and programme staff should make a point of sharing the material with the relevant Government and other external partners involved in the joint programmes.
- In order to strengthen joint communications and avoid duplicating efforts, agencies are encouraged to share information with the government on an individual basis only when that information is agency-specific.
- Develop a common UNCT contact list of Government communications officers and focal points for CER.

### **Media**

- Make targeted use of the media for key milestones in the coherence process with an emphasis on results and benefits for the public.

## 10 Communicating with Donors

When communicating with donors, it is critical to show how the UN is making progress towards working more coherently and communicating consistent messages. Communication with donors goes beyond sharing progress updates. Along with the government, donors are your most important external audience. As with the host government, the objectives of your communications efforts should go beyond raising awareness and seek to ensure that donors endorse the UNCT's effort to work together more coherently and become active cheerleaders of the initiative.

Since communication with donors is essentially another form of government advocacy, country teams can use the same methods and materials that are used for reaching out to the host government.

The key differences lie in the framing and emphasis of the messages, which should emphasize the benefits to donors of a more coherent, effective and relevant UN. This requires researching and analyzing the interests of your main donors and developing messages and products that address these needs. It can be useful to work with donors on some joint messaging, to ensure that donors' messages on CER are consistent with each other and with the UNCT. This can be done through regular briefings, dialogues and informal conversations, and by circulating fact sheets and brief updates.

You may also need to develop customized products and presentations to help you report on the particular facets of progress that are of interest to donors.

Recommended means of communication specifically for donors include:

- Sending progress reports to donor mailing lists.
- Developing a contact list of thematic UN resource persons for donors to facilitate response to inquiries.
- Donor field trips to CER programme areas.
- Media visibility for donor support to CER.

## 11 Communicating with Civil Society and the Media

### 11.1 Civil Society and NGO Partners

Although civil society and NGO partners are not the top priority audiences for information about CER, it can be useful to keep them informed and cultivate their support. Ideally, you want NGO partners to advocate in support of a more coherent, effective and relevant UN. At a minimum, you want to ensure that they do not actively criticize or oppose the process. This requires building relationships and bringing them into the process.

Civil society will want very broad information that focuses on the implications for NGOs and the general population. They will not be interested in internal details. Provide occasional, brief updates on actual progress and results and be ready to provide accessible information on demand. Typical channels of communication for civil society include:

- Regular updates on CER to a mailing list of interested civil society organizations.
- Piggy-backing on civil society seminars to promote CER through speeches and distribution of branded media and advocacy materials;
- A national consultative meeting;
- Creation of a CER web page or fact sheet with information specific to NGOs
- Briefings on CER;

### 11.2 The Media

The media will not be interested in the minutiae of CER, as it is essentially an internal UN change process. However, if you communicate effectively and focus on concrete benefits and results, you may be able to interest the media in specific joint programmes and outcomes, as well as key results or changes such as common premises or efficiency gains. Keep in mind that the overall objective of media relations is to reach relevant audiences, particularly NGO partners, donors and government representatives. Beyond these interested stakeholders, you want to make the general population aware and supportive of the UNCT and your programmes.

UNCG focal points should work closely with their programme counterparts in briefing the press on broader issues relating to the Joint Programmes for which they are responsible. Contentious, political or policy-level issues raised by the media should be referred to UNCG focal points, who can brief the RC and/or Head of Agency, as appropriate. The RC and/or Head of Agency should decide whether to respond to the media directly or whether to delegate an agreed response through the UNCG focal point. UN staff should not share personal opinions or statements about CER with the press. Instead, make sure all staff are familiar with the key messages about coherence and feel empowered to act as representatives of the UNCT in their areas of expertise, while recognizing that formal media inquiries should be referred to the UNCG.

Typical channels of communication with the media include:

- Quarterly one-day non-residential workshops for journalists;
- Press luncheon for editors and press clubs on CER;
- Establishment of CER media network;

- Regular press statements and releases coinciding with key publicity opportunities;
- Periodic press conferences and briefings coinciding with the release of key CER activities;
- Field trips to joint programme areas;
- Production and dissemination of special reports and advocacy materials targeting media;
- Periodic meetings with editors and journalists at their places of work to strengthen relationships.

See the Joint Communications Strategy and Forming and Strengthening a UNCG guidance note for more general tips on coherent media relations.

## 12 Support

For support in implementing this guidance note, please contact the UN Development Operations Coordination Office:

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