

Guidelines and tools for developing  
communication strategies for joint UN  
teams on AIDS



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JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS

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UNAIDS/08.32E / JC1582E (English original, October 2008)

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WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Guidelines and tools for developing communication strategies for joint UN teams on AIDS.

"UNAIDS/08.32E / JC1582E".

1. Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome – prevention and control. 2. Health personnel – organization and administration 3. Communication. 4. Health programs and plans.  
I. UNAIDS.

ISBN 978 92 9 173731 4

(NLM classification: WC 503.6)

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# Guidelines and tools for developing communication strategies for joint UN teams on AIDS



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## Introduction

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Following the Global Task Team (GTT) recommendations made in June 2005 on improving AIDS coordination among multilateral institutions and international donors, the UN Secretary-General issued a directive to all UN resident coordinators requesting them immediately to establish joint UN teams on AIDS and comprehensive programmes of support. By April 2008, at least 90 countries had reported establishing joint UN teams, and a further 10 have reported ongoing plans and efforts to establish one.

Beyond just a commitment to AIDS at the global level, establishment of the joint teams is an integral part of the larger reform processes taking place within the UN, including piloting the “One UN” initiative in selected countries. In March 2007, a consultation with members of UNAIDS staff from country, regional and headquarters offices was organized by the UNAIDS secretariat to review progress in the establishment of joint UN programmes and teams on AIDS, and to make recommendations on addressing challenges, implementing recommendations of the 2006 Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) meeting, and positioning UNAIDS within the “One UN” initiative at country level.

The June 2006 PCB meeting also requested an independent assessment of the implementation of the Global Task Team recommendations at country level to report on progress made and challenges identified and to make recommendations. The Global Task Team independent assessment report made recommendations in two areas one of which was technical support provision to the national AIDS response as brokered by the UN system. One of the recommendations made was the importance for resident coordinators and UNAIDS country coordinators (UCCs) to strengthen their public relations and communication strategies with external stakeholders and national partners concerning Joint UN Teams and Joint Programmes of Support on AIDS.

## Overview

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The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to countries for the development of a communication strategy for the Joint UN Team on AIDS and in support of the Joint UN Programme of Support.

The strategy will focus on:

- communications within the Joint Team;
- communications within the UN system, including staff from agencies that are not members of the Joint Team; and
- communications with government, partners and stakeholders about the Joint Team and the Joint Programme.

The document presents a process that can be used to develop the three different strategies that will be needed. By using this guidance, each strategy will reflect:

- the local context;
- the identification of gaps that can be filled;
- audiences that have been identified and investigated;
- clear messages;
- informed choice of communication channels; and
- planning, monitoring and budgeting.

The rationale for focusing on communications arises from the identified need for sharing information on and about joint teams to key stakeholders. It is also in line with the results of the Global Task Team Independent assessment.<sup>1</sup> Recommendations cover a range of areas, including:

- “Factors contributing to success at country level include...: effective communication within and outside the UN system concerning the division of labour, Joint Team and Joint Programme, including keeping international, national and state, provincial or district government and civil society partners informed about plans and activities.”
- “UNAIDS Secretariat and Cosponsors should...strengthen communication strategies with external stakeholders and national partners concerning Joint UN Teams and Joint UN Programmes of Support on AIDS”.

A country-based communication strategy (as described in this guidance) must address three main challenges.

1. The ability of the members of the Joint UN Team on AIDS to work together. An effective internal communication strategy will support information exchange and coordination of work, and facilitate productive debate, contributing on a continuous basis towards the success of the Joint UN Team on AIDS and the Joint UN Programme of Support.

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<sup>1</sup> HLSP, 2007. An independent assessment of progress on the implementation of the Global Task Team recommendations in support of national AIDS responses. UNAIDS (UNAIDS/PCB(20)/CRP4, [http://data.unaids.org/pub/ExternalDocument/2007/hlsp\\_gtt\\_assessment\\_item4\\_3\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/ExternalDocument/2007/hlsp_gtt_assessment_item4_3_en.pdf))

2. The recognition of or understanding of the Joint Team and Programme by UN agencies, in particular those that are not members of the Joint Team. Effective communications will give UN agencies the necessary knowledge of how to work together, as well as build their confidence in the Joint Team.
3. The promotion of new ways of accessing UN technical assistance and the inclusion of government, development partners and key stakeholders in the design and work of the Joint Programme. An effective communication strategy will mean that government, partners and stakeholders will have the understanding and confidence to approach the Joint Team, and the Joint UN Programme of Support will be easier to design and implement.

## Using this document

An individual (or preferably part of or the whole Joint Team) can follow the systematic process outlined in this document to develop communication strategies.

The tools are detailed in the appendices, with guidance and discussion in the body of the document. Some Joint Teams may feel that some of these activities or messages are already being communicated effectively. For this reason the first step in developing a strategy is to find out what is already working through a situation analysis. This document includes examples of different approaches, timings, messages and activities from around the world. These examples are included to stimulate creative thinking rather than as recommendations.

## The strategy development process

A six-step process should be followed for each strategy.

Step	Action	Activities
Step 1	Situation analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping communications and information</li> <li>• Identifying challenges and priorities</li> <li>• Finding out what works now</li> </ul>
Step 2	Investigate audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding out who your audiences are</li> <li>• Finding out what your audiences know and think</li> </ul>
Step 3	Message development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying messages</li> <li>• Creating clear, timely, accurate and appropriate messages</li> </ul>
Step 4	Choosing options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matching communication methods with audiences and messages</li> </ul>
Step 5	Planning communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocating responsibilities</li> <li>• Budgeting</li> <li>• Using events</li> </ul>
Step 6	Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting targets</li> <li>• Responding to results and reporting</li> </ul>

A basic principle for joint communications is the understanding that, while working together, each agency is part of the Joint Team and therefore speaks with one voice, even if that includes a technically specific voice for a specific agency. Eventually, the Joint Programme and thus the Joint Team will cover all work carried out on AIDS in a country, and joint communications will become easier.



It is also important to harmonize the Joint Team's communication activities with each agency's "One UN" communication strategy. Therefore, close collaboration is required and the UNAIDS Country Coordinator should ensure this linkage is in place. The example from Tanzania (see box) shows the importance of communicating within a "One UN" strategy.

### **Tanzania: One UN and the Joint Team**

Tanzania is a "One UN" pilot country and has put in place "One UN" structures, including a "One UN" Communications Group that manages communications around the reform process. Some members of this group are also communications focal points on the six specific thematic areas, which form the One Programme in Tanzania. The overlapping membership maximizes opportunities for the communications officers to work together and ensure synergies among the six Joint Programmes and "One UN" communications. The communications activities of the Joint Programmes are integrated into the comprehensive "One UN" Communication Strategy and Workplan 2008-2009, ensuring the harmonization and coordination of UN messages and activities. The "One UN" Communications Group has also commissioned a knowledge, attitudes and perceptions study (KAPS) on the work of the UN in country in general and on the "One UN" pilot in particular, surveying both external audiences and internal staff. These findings, especially those gauging perceptions of the UN and the reform pilot by Government and partners, are being used by Joint Programme communication focal points to inform messages and activities. In addition, a "One UN in Tanzania" information pack and display have been produced, both of which include profiles of the Joint Teams and Joint Programmes.

### **Three objective areas for communications**

Successful communications strategies benefit many other activities. Effective communication within and outside the UN system concerning the division of labour, Joint Team and Joint Programme (including keeping international, national and state, provincial or district government and civil society partners informed about plans and activities) makes a very significant contribution to the success of a Joint Team.

### ***Communications within the Joint UN Team on AIDS***

#### **Objective**

To develop a communication strategy that can be adapted to the local context and that lays out effective ways to communicate within a Joint UN Team on AIDS.

The objectives of the communication strategy are to:

- increase the efficiency of Joint UN Teams on AIDS in support of national responses;
- increase members' commitment to Joint UN Teams on AIDS and the Joint UN Programme of Support by supporting and facilitating:
  - information sharing
  - teamwork
- strengthen the functionality of the team, where members work together in a coordinated manner towards a common, recognized and agreed goal;
- communicate and advocate the UNAIDS Technical Support Division of Labour, so that it is adhered to within the Joint UN Team on AIDS;

- ensure that communication with finance and administrative officers from agencies represented in the Joint UN Team on AIDS is maintained through a mechanism (regular updates or meetings where relevant); and to
- ensure that finance or administration officers are able to follow up the disbursement of funds, by being aware of what their colleagues on the Joint Team have committed to with regard to the implementation of the Joint Team Annual Work Plan.

#### Key message areas

- Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of members of the Joint UN Teams on AIDS and other UN coordinating mechanisms.
- Application of the Technical Support Division of Labour.
- Communication of achievements of Joint UN Teams on AIDS and Joint UN Programmes of Support.
- Progress in the implementation of annual work plans and their impact.
- Examples of good practice and the experience of others.

#### Benefits

- **Speaking with one voice.**
- **Transition from individual to team working** is supported by effective communications that develop a team culture and ease the reorientation of individuals to work in a new way, within the framework of the Joint UN Programme of Support.
- **Human and financial resource capacities** are enhanced by effective communications that allow capacities, skills, experiences and responsibilities to be shared.
- **Coordination and implementation of the Joint UN Programme of Support** can be enhanced through timely and accurate communications that support the commitment and efforts of the members of the Joint UN Team on AIDS.
- **Adherence to the UNAIDS Technical Support Division of Labour** is increased, particularly in cases where agencies have previously operated in overlapping fields. Following adaptation to specific country contexts (based on established experience and comparative advantages), the resulting division of labour needs to be clearly communicated. This has been identified as an important supportive factor in clarifying roles and promoting joint programming.
- **Focus on results** is maintained by centring communications around the development of a technically sound Joint UN Programme of Support, rather than on structures.
- **Commitment and ownership by agencies** is built through increased agreement on appropriate administrative and financial structures to support the Joint UN Programme of Support.
- **Mobilization of resources for the implementation of joint activities** is increased through effective communications that support advocacy, both in country and to potential external donors.
- **Accountability of members of the Joint UN Team on AIDS.**

## Communications with UN agencies

### Objective

To develop a communication strategy to address effective ways to communicate outside the Joint UN Team on AIDS to members of the UN system (in particular UN agencies that may not be represented in the Joint Team), in order to create understanding within the UN agencies of the work of the Joint UN Team on AIDS and its resources in supporting national responses.

### Key message areas

- The UNAIDS Technical Support Division of Labour approach and its adaptation to the country context.
- The link to the “One UN” process.
- Work plans and results with regard to the Joint Programme of Support.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Joint Team on AIDS with regard to the UN Theme Group on AIDS and key contacts.

### Benefits

- **Collaborative planning** is *supported*, to reduce duplication, enhance partnership between agencies and increase the visibility of agencies with a smaller country presence by making sure everyone concerned has the right information. This will also increase the consistency of support from all agencies. Because technical capacities vary across agencies, and a number of AIDS focal points are generalists and not necessarily experts in a particular area, support can fluctuate between agencies.
- **Strategic planning** is *strengthened* by effective communications that harmonize procedures between agencies, reduce time spent in planning and help to maintain programming by communicating finalized plans and updates.
- **Leadership** is *supported* and *synergy* is created between the Joint UN Team on AIDS and the UN Country Team. Effective communications can enhance understanding of difficult topics and build commitment at the same time. Specific activities can clarify the respective roles and functions of the Joint UN Team on AIDS—particularly in situations where the national government has emphasized that there should be only one entry point within the UN system.

## Communications with government, partners and key stakeholders

There is a need for improving the effectiveness of in-country communications of the Joint Team on AIDS to external partners, and the support the Joint UN Team on AIDS offers. This is one of the recommendations made by the Global Task Team independent assessment. For each of the communications strategies, work will be required on the development of monitoring mechanisms and setting of targets.

### Objective

To develop a communication strategy that is adapted to local circumstances and that lays out effective ways to communicate outside Joint UN Teams on AIDS with government, partners and stakeholders.

The objectives of the communication strategy are to:

- promote a common understanding of Joint UN Teams on AIDS and Joint UN Programmes of Support;
- promote the Joint UN Team on AIDS as an entry point;
- raise awareness of the resources available to government partners and stakeholders;
- communicate the UNAIDS Technical Support Division of Labour approach, so that this is understood and applied by key stakeholders;
- increase the capacity of government partners and stakeholders to access services for provision of technical support through the UNAIDS Technical Support Division through a single entry point;
- increase accountability through transparency; and
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Joint Team on AIDS with regard to the UN Theme Group on AIDS and key contacts.

Key messages areas

- Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of UN agencies and staff.
- Highlighting the resources available for accessing technical support from the UN and the technical support mechanisms.
- Progress in the implementation of annual work plans and their impact.
- Promotion of UN technical support in relation to the National Action Plan and National Strategic Plan.

Benefits

**Communication with country partners** is effective if it presents a coherent and consistent set of messages; this may achieve the following benefits.

- Facilitate consultation and better coordination with national and development partners. This factor has a significant impact on the success of the implementation of the Joint UN Programme of Support.
- Ensure the integration of the needs of key stakeholders.
- Build national capacity through the provision of adequate technical support to respond to the needs of the national response.
- Open up lines of communication within the government, particularly in situations where different agencies have previously had different contacts with various government sectors. In some cases, this has led to agency-specific agendas rather than the Joint UN Team on AIDS speaking for the UN as a whole.
- Ensure that national authorities are familiar with the division of labour and access technical support through a single entry point, thereby benefiting from the system.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Joint UN Team on AIDS with regard to the UN Theme Group on AIDS and key contacts.

**An increased role of country partners** is the result of communications that ensure that all ideas are heard and considered, leading to improved consultation and commonly agreed goals. Specific activities can:

- Support increased coherence of UN actions with national priorities. In many countries, the government has supported the move to joint programming, and consultation and coordination between the Joint UN Team on AIDS and national AIDS authorities and other national partners have led to better coherence of UN actions in line with national priorities.
- Strengthen coordination and communication with partners, by introducing the Joint UN Team on AIDS to government, donors and civil society partners, and outlining specific areas of expertise.
- Enhance the role of donors in supporting and providing funding for joint programmes. This is a factor in promoting successful programming.

**Accountability** is supported through effective communications that address difficult issues and promote accountability, common understanding, buy-in to the purpose and the added value of joint AIDS programming.

## Basic communication principles

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Effective communications has five primary characteristics.

1. **Two-way:** information can be delivered to someone, but good communications involves information *and* an overall message. Effective communications includes contributions or discussion between the giver and the receiver—it *produces* and *uses* feedback.
2. **Accessible:** physically, mentally and stylistically—to those who make up the audience.
3. **Timely:** coming at the right time for the audience.
4. **Accurate:** providing the correct and/or approved information.
5. **Planned:** allowing for reinforcement of messages, testing of processes and assessment of success.

During the strategy development process, it is important to focus on what is needed to achieve the goals of the Joint UN Team on AIDS and to focus on the communication recipient rather than the information provider.

These focus areas need to be clearly defined with regard to the communication strategy. The example of an advocacy strategy developed by the Joint Team in Iran (see box) illustrates the difference between the strategies covered in this guidance and advocacy strategies related to the intervention aims of the Joint Programme.

### Iran: an advocacy strategy

In early 2006, the UNAIDS Country Office in Iran commissioned the development of an advocacy strategy for the UN system called “Strengthening the National Response to HIV/AIDS”. Its main objective was to strengthen the capacity of the UN Country Team in communicating and advocating with external partners on the issue of the Joint UN Team and the Joint Programme of Support on AIDS.

Iran’s advocacy strategy covers two of the three challenges addressed by this guidance. It principally addresses ‘communications with government, partners and stakeholders about the Joint Team and the Joint programme’ and takes communications within the UN system, including those that are not members of the Joint Team as a prerequisite to implementation of the strategy.

This strategy aims to develop a framework for harmonised advocacy on the UN image and the Joint UN Programme of Support on AIDS to be carried out by the UN Country Team/Theme Group (UNCT/UNTG). The process for the development of this strategy was based on a review of relevant national and international documents, meetings with key informants, a structured questionnaire survey of government, nongovernmental and UN stakeholders, as well as information gathered from various meetings and events.

The strategy development process sought to outline the following areas: define the guiding principles, assess the national situation, define advocacy goals and their achievability, identify main target audiences, classify appropriate tools and tactics for advocacy generate key recommendations to adjust UN advocacy efforts in Iran. Roll-out” activities were also suggested to generate momentum during the initial phase of joint advocacy, including capacity development sessions to support the assist the UNCT/UNTG in their advocacy efforts. An informa-

tion kit was developed and shared with the UNTG and Joint Team members to support their advocacy activities.

Since impact monitoring of advocacy is considered difficult, process monitoring was recommended in the form of self reports of one-to-one high-level meetings, major speeches and presentations. Fact sheets and key advocacy documents, best practices and press interviews were also used where AIDS related issues were addressed to help guide and fine-tune the UNTG's HIV advocacy agenda.

The strategy recommended that this be complemented by environmental scanning, especially through media monitoring, to detect significant policy initiatives and/or shifting priorities.

The UNTG recommended that the operational aspects of UN advocacy be delegated either to the then-Technical Working Group (TWG) which is now the Joint Team, as the existing interagency mechanism, or to a joint task force drawn from members of the TWG and the UN External Relations Team, creating a complementary mix of skills.

## Cohesion, access, strength and efficiency

The success of a Joint Team depends largely on the team's ability to manage its own information and communications systems. Work will be weakened and made more difficult in the absence of both internal and external communication strategies. These strategies need to be in place before advocacy or behaviour change strategies are developed because they relate to the Joint Team and the UN's capacities. Effective communications is fundamental to the success of Joint Teams, as it plays a key role in the following areas.

- **Cohesion:** working together to communicate the same messages, to be consulted and to contribute to the team removes embarrassing confusions and weaknesses. Any international intervention (such as work around advocacy) is improved by creating strong and universally used messages, which work to maximize the impact of all staff and activities.
- **Access:** without knowledge management systems that support the identification and dissemination of information and experience, individuals cannot be kept up to date and involved. Rigorous communications systems are required that are inclusive and facilitate liaison and consultation between team members, the UN system, and government partners and stakeholders.
- **Strength:** maintaining horizontal and vertical communications, facilitating communications channels, managing messages and information, and the formation of internal partnerships/networks/relationships enables the team to maximize its added value and capacity to carry out advocacy and behaviour change work.
- **Efficiency:** increasing knowledge management and lesson-learning means that wheels are not reinvented, response times are reduced and people are able to focus on constructive inputs rather than feeling excluded and having to duplicate activities.

Many of these benefits can also be felt at a regional level.

## West and Central Africa region

The Joint UN Regional Team on AIDS uses a quarterly newsletter to:

- recap on who the members of the Joint Team are, what working groups exist, and what meetings are due;
- update on deadlines and inform on the allocation of Programme Acceleration Funds;
- communicate agency-specific activities related to the Joint Team;
- summarize outcomes of regional meetings;
- outline timetables and responsibilities, such as for planning Global Fund submissions; and
- detail launches of regional activities.

## Tips

Whether planning internal or external communications activities, it is important to remember the following points.

- One communication method cannot be made to fit all needs.
- A message must be clear to avoid creating confusion.
- Timing of communications should enable them to be used effectively by the intended recipients.
- Avoid activities that are ‘high budget, low impact’ or ‘low budget, low impact’.
- Always build in monitoring and evaluation activities in the development so that results can be recognized and acted upon.
- Strengthen information systems to capture input to communication activities, and maintain accuracy and a common voice.
- A sign-off system for content should minimize time spent between production and distribution.
- Distribution systems are as important as production systems.
- Participating agencies need to make an active commitment to two-way communication.
- If only the central agenda is covered and there is a lack of space for other voices, communications will give the impression that the process is a public relations exercise rather than a genuine attempt at effective sharing and coordination.

## Managing information

Information needs to be well constructed, and helped to move in a planned way. Information is not a simple thing: it is easily distorted; bits can be lost; it can be wrong; it can be used for negative as well as positive purposes; it can frighten people; it can bore or confuse people; it can be made up; and it can be hidden.

Similarly, communications activities can fail to communicate.



Information management is a specific skill; it needs to be actively applied if information is to be used effectively in support of Joint Teams. For any Joint Team, it is recommended that there is one central point through which all information is managed. This means that all the agencies involved have responsibility for providing information, but that one designated organization, department or individual has responsibility for disseminating it internally and externally through standard procedures.

Information managers should know what is coming to them in the future and when. They should develop mechanisms for capturing information from the external world, as well from the internal world of the Joint Team. They should have the ability to:

- tailor information to the intended audience, making it **accessible**;
- check information for correctness and communicate it **accurately**;
- disseminate information so that it arrives at the right time, in the right place—so that it is **timely**.

Information and communication strategies require an initial and continuing investment of resources. However, the resulting benefits far outweigh reasonable costs and reduce diversionary criticism. Therefore, it will be necessary to develop some simple but effective communication tools that maximize network communications, such as a newsletter, e-mail network or regular meetings.

The UNAIDS Country Coordinator's development and management of a calendar of dates will support communications strategies by providing important dates to the process and will also increase coordination between agencies.

Making the Joint Team part of the "One UN" process is also important to the management of information. In Ethiopia the process of developing a One UN communication strategy is in progress; it is planned to integrate the comprehensive One UN communication strategy and Work Plan 2008–2009 to ensure harmonization and coordination with the thematic areas in the Joint Team (see box).

### Ethiopia, the Joint Team and the "One UN" approach

In 2007, the Resident Coordinator in Ethiopia established a UN communication group comprised of communication focal points from all the UN agencies in Ethiopia (including agencies that are not members of the Joint Team). This group has been functioning with a focus mainly on events, such as the UN Week celebration, Millennium celebration, stand up campaigns, and others. For 2008, it was recognized that a "One UN" communications strategy was needed, beyond coordinating event-driven activities.

The overall purpose of the "One UN" communication strategy is to strengthen coordination, harmonization and alignment of communication initiatives, improve communication for advocacy and behaviour change, support media capacity and partnerships, improve the public image of the UN, enhance internal communication and orientation, and strengthen knowledge sharing amongst the UN and other development agencies.

The "One UN" communication focal person is also a member of the Joint Team and thus maximizes the opportunities for synergies of the One UN communication group in Ethiopia with Joint Team communication activities.

## Developing a strategy

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### Situation analysis

Different people have different views of every situation and often each person argues that their view is correct. This exercise looks at a methodology for trying to draw different views into a coherent picture of reality.

A situation analysis is an analysis of the context and environment within which a project is to take place. This informs a better choice of intervention and can build participative ownership of needs, indicators, baselines, etc. The situation analysis is usually the first stage of a *project cycle mechanism*<sup>2</sup>, which informs project-related decisions.

A communications situation analysis helps determine what should be addressed in a communication strategy. The process described here is founded on a need for information that explains both **what** is happening and **why** it is happening.

The results of the communications situation analysis will support the process of deciding how to proceed with a project, through:

- describing the current country situation; and
- illuminating the scale of intervention required.

Following the situation analysis, indicators need to be constructed to measure performance or change over time. The purpose of these efforts is to:

- facilitate partnerships and team building, and bring together stakeholders and encourage joint ownership and responsibility for work in the future;
- encourage participation, and increase the quality of the information acquired during communications activities and the acceptability of the results; and
- reinforce country capacities by providing experience of different methods.

The process that is recommended for developing a communications situation analysis is made up of four tools that are detailed in the appendixes.

1. Key informant interviews.
2. Mapping communications and information.
3. Identifying challenges and priorities.
4. Identifying what works now.

The situation analysis process helps to identify important areas of knowledge or actions that are needed. It is important to remember to look at other issues, alongside existing communication and information activities. In Ethiopia (see box), a framework for performance has been developed. This allows Joint Team members to identify where they are in a process of moving towards the Joint UN Team on AIDS and Joint UN Programme of Support goals. This also enables them to see what the objectives are for a communication strategy at any particular point in time. Identifying the internal and external communications actions at each stage will provide a matching communications framework.

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<sup>2</sup> A way of expressing the constituent parts of a project in a logical order.

### Ethiopia: identifying communication actions

Communication is a key part of the work of the Joint Team, from meetings, minutes and reports, to exhibitions, information packs and websites. The exercise of looking through the framework for performance and noting ideas also adds the aspect of timing to the discussion.

For example:

- To achieve “Recognition that the Joint Team is more than the sum of the individual agency activities on HIV and AIDS”, the team will look at communicating messages on added value. This will also give them an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of their communications work by testing audiences to see whether they can name the added value of the Joint Team.
- To achieve “Periodical discussions of data and any gaps in understanding”, they might consider providing content through a range of communications activities, from newsletters to leaflets, meetings and exhibitions around the theme of “know your epidemic”.
- To achieve “Partners recognize that the Joint Team is effectively supporting and adding value to the national AIDS authority”, they need to put effort into communicating with partners about the achievements of the Joint Team, perhaps through breakfast presentations, an edition of the newsletter or a desk calendar marked with an achievement for each month.

### Relationship to a baseline

A baseline and a situation analysis are not the same thing. Although it may be possible to identify some baseline information through a situation analysis, this may be fortunate, but cannot be by design. A situation analysis is a process through which a large number of inter-related factors and components are identified. These include needs and possible interventions.

A baseline is a measurement of key indicators of change and is undertaken before any intervention is initiated. Thus, it is against a baseline that realistic targets are set, and against which change is measured and judged. If there is no baseline then there can be no accurate evaluation.

The key indicators for the baseline are selected **after** the situation analysis has informed decision-making about how to design the project and what interventions and activities are to be included.

### Investigating audiences

The key to effective communication is to understand the audience—what they need, how they might want to receive it, and what their information and communication habits are. Some people only read one page at most; others prefer something physical they can hold; others read in detail; some want news of big events; and some want news of all events.

There are many types of audience. One constructive way to separate audiences into groups is to identify primary and secondary audiences for each message. The more audiences you have, the weaker the message becomes.

The primary audience is the most important audience for the message. You will shape the message content and style around the needs of this audience. For example, high-level people will be able to understand language that is more complex and internal audiences will already understand certain things, such as terminology.

Focus on the primary audience and their needs, and communicate with them appropriately.

The secondary audiences are just that—secondary. You do not shape messages especially for them. If they have access to the same materials as the primary audience then that is good. If they can make use of the materials, then that is good too, whether by accident or intent, but you should not shape your initial activity to meet their needs.

Appendix 2 describes four suggested audience research methods and offers guidance on how to find out who an audience is, what they are thinking and what they know.

## Developing messages

The selection of messages or content areas is an important part of the communications process. It starts with looking at the audiences and then looking at what needs to be communicated. A message can be viewed as a theme or strand made up of various content over time.

All messages must be based on evidence and need, in the same way that information must be accurate, accessible and timely. However, a message relates to what you want the audience to do or feel after receiving the information. For example, news of activities is information. Content might be a list of events, photos and in-depth reports from some of the events. The message is “Action—we are doing things, we are active and influential, and you should know about it”.

Once you have defined the message, you might well want to include different types of content, such as interviews with influential people, an agenda of upcoming events, etc. The message might work for both internal and external audiences or it might be necessary to keep future plans only for internal consumption by the Joint Team. Lastly, there is an important decision to be made about the best way to communicate the messages for a particular audience.

**Messages** are a critical element of any communication strategy, whether internal or external. Even with convincing facts and interest to support your case, most communications efforts are likely to fail without clear, simple messages that appeal to the target audience.

- **Develop clear and compelling messages.** A message explains **what** you are proposing, **why** it is worth doing, and the positive **impacts** of your policy proposal. A few rules can help you choose the content of your message wisely.
- **Deliver messages effectively.** When you deliver a message, you want your target audience to agree with it and then take action on your proposal. For this to happen, you must ensure they will **understand** your message and **believe** your message. Of course, you also need to ensure they **receive** your message.
- **Reinforce messages.** Usually, delivering a message **once is not enough**. Always have a strategy to reinforce your message, either yourself, or through others. When you resend your message, you can also use the opportunity to respond to any initial concerns expressed by your target audience.

There are five elements of messages.

1. **Content:** the content is the central idea of the message. What is the main point you want to communicate to your audience? What single idea do you hope the audience will take away from your message?
2. **Language:** language refers to the words you choose to communicate your message. Is the choice of words clear or could various audiences interpret it differently? Is the language appropriate for your target audience? For instance, you would use different language when appealing to university researchers than you would when communicating to a youth audience.
3. **Messenger or source:** the messenger or source is the person who will deliver the message. Is the messenger credible to your target audience? Is it possible to involve representatives of the community affected by the policy change as messengers? For example, can you invite a community leader to join you for a high-level meeting with a policy maker? Sometimes nongovernmental organizations can be effective intermediaries for the affected population at the policy-making table.
4. **Format or medium:** the format or medium is the communication channel you use for message delivery. What is the most compelling format to reach your target audience—a signed petition, a face-to-face meeting, a television or radio advertisement?
5. **Time and place:** when and where will you deliver your message? Is there an electoral campaign underway that might make policy makers more receptive than usual to your message? Are there other political events that you can link up with to draw more attention to your issue? Some advocacy groups connect their communication strategies to events such as World AIDS Day or Africa Malaria Day.

A message is only effective if the target of your communication can understand what you are asking them to do, precisely. Once you have developed the content of your messages, there are at least two questions to ask to verify your work.

1. Have you chosen the language your audience can understand? For example, have you avoided using jargon, technical terminology or ‘UN-speak’? It can be helpful to try out your message on someone in your primary audience.
2. Will the audience know what action to take if they agree with you? For example, is your goal for them to make a decision, call someone, vote a certain way, change a corporate practice or convince others to support your proposal?

A **clear message** uses accessible language and suggests an action step for the target audience.

Make a specific request...

- “Please consider supporting a national policy to encourage adult male circumcision.”

Make one strong supporting argument...

- “International research shows that male circumcision is effective in reducing the risk of HIV infection for men.” [Document the benefits.]
- “Please read this report, which shows the positive results of male circumcision for this country.”

An **unclear message** uses obscure language and offers only vague benefits.

Delivers no concrete information...

- “Male circumcision is a critical issue and we are working on it.”

Contains jargon...

- “The challenge now is for populations with high HIV incidence and low prevalence of male circumcision, or countries with such regions, to determine whether, and then how, to implement programmes to provide a core package for safe male circumcision services.”

Makes no clear request for action from the audience...

- “If you’re interested, we can provide more information to you about our programming. We hope you and your colleagues will have male circumcision in mind as a top priority as you debate national strategies for universal access.”

Clarity of message may require rewriting technical information in an appropriate format and style for the audience, and approaching the message in a creative manner.

The UNAIDS Technical Support Division of Labour defines the roles of lead agencies: it is important to avoid varying interpretations or ambiguity. Clear communication on these issues is necessary for the division of labour to work and bring its planned benefits. This is a key document for each of the communications strategies.

Making the division of labour relevant and accessible to specific target audiences requires thought. Distributing a localized version that is adapted at the country level may not be enough. Perhaps put names and faces to the roles, develop a presentation, a display, focus on a different role in each edition of a newsletter. It is important to bring this document alive in a local context: an A4 printed publication of dense text is unlikely to get the message across to other UN staff, partners and stakeholders, and the Joint Team and ways of accessing technical support will remain a mystery to an important audience.

In China (see box), they initiated the process with a clear statement of the division of labour for the Joint Programme, called the Matrix of UN Lead Agencies and Supporting Agencies. This matrix is probably common in countries with a Joint team as it reflects the local adaptation of the division of labour document. This matrix then becomes the foundation of communications messages relating to how the government and external to the UN partners can access support from the Joint Team.

### China: the division of labour

Technical support area	Lead UN agency	Supporting agencies
1.1. Improved national policy framework and coordinating mechanisms		
Strengthened national coordinating bodies	UNAIDS	All UN agencies
More comprehensive, mutually consistent and harmonized national laws protecting rights of people living with HIV	UNDP	All UN agencies
Strengthened policy implementation and review if necessary	UNAIDS	All UN agencies

Technical support area	Lead UN agency	Supporting agencies
<b>1.2. Enhanced support to local government responses to AIDS</b>		
Provincial laws and regulations revised to reflect effective strategic responses	UNDP	All UN agencies
Strengthened local government action plans and capacity to respond to epidemic	UNDP	All UN agencies
Strengthened implementation capacity at the provincial level	UNAIDS	All UN agencies
<b>1.3. Expanded engagement of civil society organizations in the AIDS response</b>		
National and international civil society mobilized and fully engaged in AIDS response at all levels	UNAIDS	UNDP
Civil society empowered and strengthened for social dialogue, policy development and implementation	UNDP	UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNIFEM
<b>1.4. Increased mobilization and better prioritization and utilization of resources</b>		
National, local and international resources mobilized	UNAIDS	All UN agencies
Resource gaps defined with effective costing, budgeting and tracking of resources	World Bank	UNAIDS
<b>1.5. Strengthened monitoring of the epidemic and the effectiveness of responses to it</b>		
Effective surveillance at national and provincial levels	WHO	UNFPA, UNAIDS
Enhanced empirical and strategic information on behaviour of vulnerable groups and gender impacts of HIV	UNFPA	WHO, UNDP, UNIFEM, World Bank, UNAIDS
One national M&E system generating sound strategic information for decision makers	UNAIDS	WHO, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, World Bank

## Managing change with communications

One of the main impacts of communication is change—particularly in the field of managing change, which relies heavily on communication. While this is an area of work that bears further investigation, the Joint Team and Joint Programme include a process of bringing people and institutions together. That process can be moved forward through targeted planning of communications specifically to create a desired change.

It cannot be assumed that change happens automatically, simply because it is needed or wanted. It is necessary to move people through a number of different stages, particularly if the change is to be sustained. This is also true for members of Joint Teams, whose members are moving through a set of radical and important changes.

For an effective communication strategy, it is important to understand where the majority of the target audience are positioned within the process of change. Only once this has been correctly identified can the appropriate communication activities be developed. Mistakes in management and in communications can easily set back a change process significantly.

There are many manuals to refer to for advice on how to best communicate during a change process. Table 1 below offers some suggestions.

**Table 1**

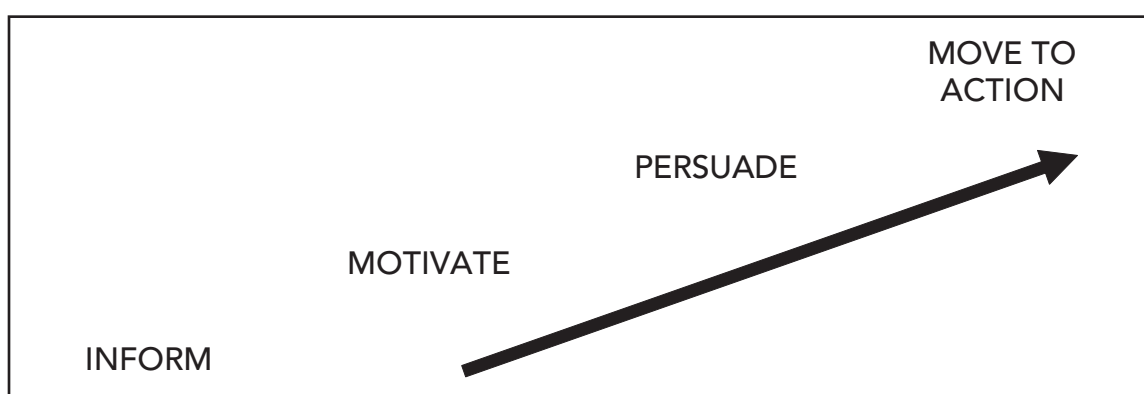
Moves	Ways to communicate
Move 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give people thinking space and time</li> <li>• Give clear information</li> <li>• Clarify people’s new roles both publicly and privately</li> <li>• Be honest</li> </ul>
Move 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen in a two-way communication process</li> <li>• Acknowledge other people’s views and fears</li> <li>• Provide clear information</li> <li>• Focus on priorities in communications</li> </ul>
Move 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look forward by communicating plans and visions</li> <li>• Establish a new world by reporting what is happening</li> <li>• Look for innovation through two-way communication</li> </ul>
Move 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be clear about communicating</li> <li>• Set goals</li> <li>• Recognize and accept contributions and commitments</li> <li>• Praise and focus on results</li> </ul>

The suggestions in Table 1 above may provide a contents list for a regular newsletter, an agenda for a series of events, or the outline for a communication strategy that includes a number of steps.

### Choosing options for communication

This step helps you choose which communications mediums you are going to use at each stage of the communication strategy. Figure 1 shows how we want to affect the primary audience.

**Figure 1**



The criteria for choosing communication methods include costs, risk and credibility. Credible methods are chosen so that people will trust and value what is communicated through that method. For example, the following criteria affect the credibility of a messenger:

- messenger is known and trusted by (or will appeal to) target audiences;
- messenger can demonstrate knowledge and insight into the issue;



- messenger is a source whose opinion target audiences will value;
- a clear link exists between the messenger and the group affected by the issue.

There is also a clear need to be able to reinforce messages. After the message is sent, it is not enough to wait and 'hope for the best'. Several actions can be taken to reinforce your message over time.

9. Respond to concerns immediately. Try to identify any concerns of the target audience as soon as possible. Either address these concerns right away (for example, if in a meeting) or focus the next communication on ways to resolve those concerns.
10. Resend the message. In the private sector, companies use advertising to send messages to the public repeatedly, hoping that people will eventually buy their products. While it is important not to overwhelm target audiences with too much information, persistence can pay off. Either resend the message or, better yet, use other methods and content to resend the message. It is best to monitor the impact of the original message before resending to allow for any changes or improvements that might be necessary.
11. There are a number of effective techniques to help reinforce the message and follow up the first communication.
  - Meet personally with the target audience.
  - Be sure to respond to enquiries and comments.
  - Arrange for an ally to contact the target audience with a similar message.

Timing is also an important part of choosing the most appropriate communication medium is. What is right at one time may not be right at another. For example, more effort is likely to be needed at the beginning of a process than later on, but if messages are never sent, there will be an eventual tail-off and reversal of progress.

## Possible communication activity sources

Plan to balance frequency of communication with the communication medium. It is highly unlikely that choosing just one of the communication mediums below will effectively communicate the intended message to the intended audience. The list below is limited—have a look at what the commercial sector is doing to communicate. Ideas such as a monthly achievement on an attractive calendar for UN agencies, a poster of the division of labour for government offices, breakfast meetings for heads of agencies, retreats for teams—all these actually come originally from the commercial sector. The communications medium menu comes in two parts: those predominantly face-to-face; and those predominantly object-based. Either option can use information communication technology (ICT) approaches.

### Face-to-face

- Retreats: (where a great deal of communication takes place) can strengthen the working relationship between Joint Team members and enable a thorough assessment of successes, gaps and challenges.
- Meetings: can be small or large one-off meetings; annual or monthly, they can be long or short—be sure to match purpose to method.
- Presentations.

- Events: similar to meetings but usually including something other than an agenda-based discussion, such as the launch of a document, lunch with a particular group of people, a buffet event.
- Field trips.
- Briefings: usually purely presentational with perhaps a ‘Question and Answer’ session.

When using a presentation style in a meeting with a small number of people, develop presentation aids to help get the message across. The audience will remember the presentation aids, so they will remember the message. These do not have to be flipcharts or a slideshow, all of which require space and can appear to be too formal.

- A piece of card (folded in three lengthwise to make a long pyramid or prism) can be used to communicate three points. Write each point on one side and rotate the card as you move through the presentation.
- People often use two balls to illustrate how the Earth moves around the Sun, so why not think of something that helps to illustrate the working together and the added value of Joint Teams? A saucer could represent how it used to be and a cup could be the new joint working. In the cup goes just the right amount of coffee, hot water, sugar and milk, with each maintaining their identity and (in this case) technical speciality, but together they make a good cup of coffee!

## Documentation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letters—see the example from Uganda in box. Letters can also be used to encourage input and remind people of events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newsletters—in Ethiopia, a regular newsletter is produced for the Joint Team and its target audiences. It is short but informative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photos—Tajikistan used photos to illustrate its advocacy documents and Joint Team leaflets to communicate the local nature of the work</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports—Zambia prepares biannual reports on the activities of the Joint Team to share with the UNCT and key stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaflets—in Malawi, a leaflet was used to communicate with partners and proved a useful quick tool for people to use when recapping on the details of the Joint Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packs—these have been used in Tanzania to communicate “One UN” issues and they have included Joint Team information</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotional items: calendars, mugs, tea-shirts, bags, etc. In Indonesia, bags were produced to convey the division of labour to a lay audience</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Websites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fact sheets</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters</li> </ul>	

## Using information technology

The use of information communication technology is now commonplace, from the dissemination of documents to more tailored activities such as newsletters, shared workspaces and e-mail lists. In the Russian Federation, the Joint Team is in the process of developing an e-workspace to facilitate communication among members.

Information communication technology is recommended for all aspects of communications, but the management of the content and messages is crucial to the success of information communication technology mechanisms. While the cost of production may be dramatically reduced, the cost of human input cannot be—particularly if the communications technology

system is to create two-way communication. The need for both machines and people should be reflected in any strategy and it should always be remembered that information communication technology-based communications are very different from the printed word—in all senses the printed word needs to be adapted to the technology system. A densely-written, long document remains ineffective whether it arrives electronically or by post.

Well-managed e-mail-based systems have proved extremely useful for maintaining dialogue, cohesion and access to filtered external information. A combination of the two is good for information supply.

However be warned, communications activities can become redundant if they do not meet the needs and capacities of the people concerned and if the system is allowed to clog up with unwanted or unused information and communication.

When planning a strategy, consider:

- password-protected systems for international document consultation and reporting;
- electronic distribution lists;
- moderated e-mail list-server mechanisms for the maintenance of information exchange and discussion, Internet meetings;
- online meeting formats and methods; and
- document sharing, discussion forums and calendar scheduling.

Information communication technology systems can be monitored for effectiveness after six months, to address:

- introduction of automatic habits;
- waning of interest in some systems;
- problems to be highlighted; and
- new areas of need.

## Planning communications

### Timing

The timing of communications is very important, as mentioned earlier. Not only is there a 'message to timing' relationship but also a 'communications medium to timing' relationship, which often dominates in terms of expenditure.

When establishing the Joint Team and developing the Joint Programme you are recommended to take the following actions.

- Acknowledge that the initial motivation for establishing the Joint Team and Joint Programme is the responsibility of UNAIDS Country Coordinator and the Resident Coordinator for the heads of agencies in the UN system. The letter from the Secretary General to Resident Coordinators to establish Joint Teams and Joint Programmes is a useful tool, along with the guidance notes from the UN Development Group and the UNAIDS Secretariat.
- Carry out continuous education and engagement of the HIV technical and programme staff on conceptual understanding of joint programming and the Joint Team structure. Examples of how other countries have moved ahead on joint programming and the challenges they face can be useful for starting dialogue.

- Plan a specific education/learning opportunity for the UN decision-making mechanism (UCO, Joint Team, UNCT and other structures) on how delivering as one on HIV fundamentally changes the way agencies and programmes work.
- Maintain interest by translating global or regional guidance into clear presentations using concrete local examples.
- Open issues up for discussion and debate, but always be solution-based and use examples from other countries.
- Break content and discussions into different aspects. For example, discuss UN comparative advantage in one meeting and capacity issues of the UN in another.
- Provide opportunities for competent Joint Team members to lead discussion in aspects of UN reform.

In Uganda (see box), the Joint Team used face-to-face communications to start the process of formation and raise awareness of the new approach amongst government staff and partners. As work has progressed, different methods have become more appropriate and they are now considering the introduction of a newsletter.

### Uganda: starting out

From the outset, the UNAIDS Country Coordinator and members of UNAIDS secretariat staff involved themselves in **dialogue** with everyone concerned. Their advice is to speak to everyone, no matter how distantly concerned with the issue of AIDS, including Heads of Agencies and line management for Joint Team members, as well people external to the UN system.

They particularly focused on a message about the **added value** of the new system and set out to keep repeating it. Their advice is to identify concrete examples of the added value of the Joint Team and Joint Programme approach.

Using individual team members as spokespersons creates a sense of excitement and the team felt that those that came on board would eventually bring the others. The division of labour document was central in helping to get the line managers of team members on board, as it detailed how things should work.

The writing of **letters** has been particularly important in keeping everyone up to date in the early period and the regular repeating of the added value message. They did find that each agency needed an agency-specific **presentation** of the Joint Team approach.

The strategy included an 'open door' policy with Joint Team members and agency heads, regular celebration of success and efficient updates about progress with the Joint Programme (oral to the UN Country Team and donors and oral plus e-mail to Joint Team members). Another important aspect is a community-friendly Joint Programme document with updates provided in similarly community-friendly modalities (posters or cartoons rather than long formal reports).

While this approach is recognized as high maintenance, it is felt that it has been effective. The team has also **targeted external stakeholders** by actively pursuing opportunities to meet with them (Community Service Organizations, HIV development partners) and share information on the work of the Joint Team in key ongoing decision-making committees for HIV. They have also organized formal sessions to disseminate reform issues and the division of labour. They are now looking to the next stage with an **exhibition** for the external audience to help explain how to access assistance and a **Joint Team diary** for the internal audience.

In implementation, they make the following recommendations.

- Define communication mechanisms with the Joint Team structures—regularity of meetings, who convenes when and how.
- Keep and distribute a Note for records.
- Develop an annual schedule of events collectively.
- Organize a formal dissemination of Joint Team information and the Joint Programme to external stakeholders—ensure engagement of the UNCT.
- Develop advocacy materials in relation to the Joint Team and Joint Programme—distribute them at every opportunity.
- Organize joint booths at national events or conferences and disseminate Joint Team and Joint Programme materials.
- Ensure representation by the right agencies in the right forums through the division of labour.
- Always organize social events for the team—it enhances team building.

## Calendar dates

Throughout the year, there are various events, from the widely publicized World Aids Day to review processes within the Joint Team. Looking ahead to what is planned is a good way to start detailing what needs to happen and when, so that communications either supports the run up or publicizes the result of an event. Be aware that some events are more interesting to some audiences than others.

In Belarus (see box) for example, they identified all the main dates that they needed to consider and take advantage of. They also divided the work around those dates between the different members of the Joint Team. This then forms a good basis for planning and allocating workload, as well as important communication opportunities.

Belarus: planning around events		
#	Communication issue	Cosponsor leaders
<b>UN-supported reports</b>		
	UNGASS reporting	UNAIDS, UNDP
	Global Fund progress report	UNDP
	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission	UNICEF
<b>In-country surveys, research, analysis</b>		
	Second generation surveillance	UNDP
	Situation analysis on children and HIV	UNICEF
	Analysis of legislation	UNDP
	AIDS impact assessment	World Bank
<b>HIV policy documents (international and regional) for release</b>		
	Voluntary counselling and testing policy	WHO
	UN reform	UN Reform

	Treatment protocols	WHO
	Model Law on HIV	UNDP
	Global reports	UNAIDS
	Programmatic guidance	UNAIDS
	Best practice	UNAIDS
	MONE report	UNICEF
	Youth...	UNICEF
<b>Events and campaign launches</b>		
	World AIDS Day	UNAIDS, UNDP
	<i>List according to the UNAIDS calendar</i>	
	Interchurch Conference	UNDP, UNAIDS
	National Conference of people living with HIV	UNDP
	Global Fund project events	UNDP

## Budgeting for implementation

Each organization will have its own way of developing a budget. The key advice is to develop a budget as an essential first step. Communications costs money, and that money needs to be available throughout the year, every year and in the necessary amounts. Avoid running out of funds towards the end of the year or having funding cut as other activities apparently take priority. The seriousness with which a Joint Team views communications is not simply reflected in the budget. A communication strategy needs to deliver cost-effective communications with matching impact. Table 2 shows some of the costs to consider when developing the budget.

**Table 2**

Category item	Funds needed	Financial support	In-kind support
Cost of strategy development			
Salaries: for the personnel needed for information gathering, editing production dissemination, etc.			
Cost of gathering data: e.g. field trips, travel to interviews, etc.			
Production costs			
Equipment			
Communication for gathering data: telephone, fax, computer, radio, postage, etc. (including monthly costs)			
Dissemination costs: including events, meetings, seminar or conference costs, refreshments, materials, portfolios, presentation supplies, as well as distribution of printed materials			
Supplies: paper, computer disks and CD-ROMs, pencils, portfolios, etc.			
Dissemination activities, etc.			
Monitoring and evaluation			

## Organizing implementation

If possible, avoid placing sole responsibility for communications with one person. It is important that the Joint Team believes in and trusts the communications activities to work on behalf of all agencies. Some Joint Teams are already forming working groups to steer communications activities, and in some cases carry them out. This working group then reports into the main Joint Team and has a representative on the core Joint Team whose role is to gather information from the Joint Team to be fed into the communications activities, and to feed back communications plans and results.

Sign-off procedures often introduce delay and sometimes conflict. It is important to design systems to minimize delay but also to inform those involved about the process and what is expected of them. Concise terms of reference can help, along with clear guidelines against which materials can be judged.

## Monitoring and evaluation

This requires designing simple but effective monitoring procedures to gauge actual achievement against targets set for all aspects of the strategy.

This also means designing a review process for each strategy, in terms of their achievement. It is suggested that a review is carried out, depending on the targets set and as part of the Joint Team annual review as outlined in the Second Guidance Paper on Joint UN Teams on AIDS. This process should include decisions about how strategies and activities might be changed to better achieve the targets. For monitoring to be effective, the results must be responded to.

Remember, it will be necessary to report on the effectiveness of all three communications strategies as part of the Joint Team process.

Apply the usual monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process to each strategy, as if they were programmes.

- **Monitoring** is the routine tracking and reporting of priority information about a programme and its intended inputs, outputs, and outcomes<sup>3</sup>. Monitoring aims to measure **what** is happening and what progress has been made with respect to a baseline established at the beginning of the communication strategy;
- **Evaluation** is a rigorous, scientifically based collection of information about programme activities, characteristics and outcomes that determines the merit or worth of a specific programme; evaluation studies are used to improve programmes and inform decisions about future resource allocations<sup>4</sup>. Evaluation aims to explain **why** things are happening and to identify and share important lessons. Evaluation refers to judgments about the **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact** and **sustainability** of communication activities.

<sup>3</sup> UNAIDS. National AIDS Programmes: a guide to monitoring and evaluation. Geneva, 2000 (UNAIDS/00.17E, [http://data.unaids.org/Publications/IRC-pub05/jc427-mon\\_ev-full\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/Publications/IRC-pub05/jc427-mon_ev-full_en.pdf)).

<sup>4</sup> UNAIDS. *A framework for monitoring and evaluating HIV prevention programmes for most-at-risk populations*. Geneva, 2007 (UNAIDS/07.15E, [http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2007/20070420\\_me\\_of\\_prevention\\_in\\_most\\_at\\_risk\\_populations\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/Manual/2007/20070420_me_of_prevention_in_most_at_risk_populations_en.pdf)).

Tracking the progress and effectiveness of efforts can lead to better programming and better use of resources. This does increase accountability and provide useful information for other work, as well as:

- **informing decision-making** by providing accurate information when reviewing goals and objectives, priorities and allocation of resources;
- **improving activities** by providing accurate information about their implementation, impact and cost-effectiveness;
- **supporting good communications management practices** by providing accurate information to management and about management;
- **increasing Joint Team ownership and enthusiasm**, by showing that efforts are working and achieving their objectives;
- **producing knowledge** of what works and (just as importantly) what does not;
- **increasing critical thinking**, through the careful consideration of how well communication activities are working; and
- **increasing accountability** to the Joint Team, by showing commitment to determining whether programmes are working effectively and efficiently.

It is important to identify indicators of change. An indicator is a measurable and communicable piece of data that provides a simple and reliable means to measure changes caused by an intervention or to gauge the performance of an activity. An indicator needs to be measured over time in order to determine change resulting from actions taken.

An indicator is not a target. A target defines what is to be achieved and an indicator is what needs to be measured in order to determine whether the target has been (or is being) achieved.

Consider filling in the form below to keep a record of the strategy from an M&E perspective.

**Table 3**

Description of strategy, programme or activity	Indicator	Target	Means of Measurement	Assumptions



## Appendix 1. Tools for situation analysis

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### Key informant interviews

**Key informant interviews** gain confidential insights into sources of information, stakeholder perceptions and the socio-political environment.

**Objective:** to draw the ideas and concerns of key team members and stakeholders into the situation analysis process, and to elicit information from them that will be fed into that process. The interviews look at levels of knowledge and attitudes rather than seeking correct or sympathetic answers.

Choose a few people (both internal and external to the Joint UN Team on AIDS) who are involved in receiving or producing information and communications related to the Joint UN Team on AIDS. Arrange a short meeting with each of them separately. It may be appropriate to concentrate primarily on two types of person—those who will not be attending the communication strategy development meeting, and those who hold the most power and therefore have the most need. For example, for external communications, consider selecting heads of agencies and direct line supervisors of those who are members of the Joint Team, people in the national ministry of health and other partner organizations. For internal communications, consider those who may not always attend meetings of the Joint Team but who work on the issue, key players in the Joint Team and any communications staff.

These interviews give individuals an opportunity to communicate their ideas and thoughts in a way that does not require ownership or indeed ‘political correctness’. Carry out these interviews before the communication strategy development meeting, the findings can be given at the start of the meeting.

The results need to be analysed so that overall trends can be given to the meeting. At no point should it be possible to identify who said what.

### Mapping communications and information

**Mapping exercises** aim to turn a complex situation into one that can be

- (i) recognized and identified clearly, and
- (ii) compared with future situations.

**Objective:** to draw out the personal opinion of individuals in a manner that allows open discussion and that is non-confrontational. A mapping exercise should be wide-ranging and imaginative.

The mapping process should be undertaken for each of the three communications strategies covered in this document. In order to develop a communication strategy, it is important to sort out:

- who has what information and what they do with it; and
- who communicates with whom and about what.

## Process

- Identify all ‘information holder’ organizations. Write the name of each identified organization onto a large coloured card and place these ‘organization’ cards on the floor or stick them to the wall.
- Next to each organization card, list each type of information that this organization holds, writing each type onto a separate ‘information’ card.
- Using a different colour of card (if possible, or else add a special corner marking or border), write down for each organization what additional information they need.
- Use arrow cards to indicate how information holders share their existing information and with which other organizations. Do not include arrows for information that is only shared when someone asks for it.

In this way, a map has been created of what is currently happening to existing available information. This map should be and kept. Invite participants to examine the map they have created and ask them the following questions.

1. Is there any information that is not being communicated to someone in another organization who needs it?

Make and review a list of reasons why this is not happening. Note that making information available if someone asks for it is not the same as communicating it. Do the people who do not receive this information really need it? Conclude by writing a list of organizations not receiving information that they need, what that information is and where it could come from. This method demonstrates information gaps in a clear and open way.

2. Are there only one or two efficient ways in which organizations communicate information to all other organizations?

Identify information cards and arrow cards where information in an organization goes to every other organization and remove these arrow and information cards. Then review the different ways the information is communicated and identify the main communication methods. Is there any overlap between methods of communication used? Is the same information, for example, presented in a meeting and then disseminated through an e-mail? If so, is this useful or wasted effort? This method demonstrates possible overlaps and duplication of effort. Another example: perhaps one meeting for all HIV information every three months is more productive and efficient than holding six separate meetings. Ask participants to find ways of rationalizing their communications efforts – such as through a single joint publication rather than several individual publications.

3. Is there some information that is communicated to organizations that neither want it, nor need it? Make a list and discuss how to stop this happening.

By the end of this part of the exercise, participants should have created a map of what information is currently available and what happens to it. They should also be able to list:

- who is not receiving the information they need;
- who is not communicating the information they have; and
- the main forms of communications being used.

Continue the exercise to construct a new communications and information map that shows how to get information to the right people, at the right time and through the most efficient communications medium. This map should also be kept, as it will form an important part of the communication strategy.

Having asked the participants to compare the two maps and review their work, conclude this exercise by explaining that it is very important to keep information maps up to date, as they help to review what is happening to information and what might be possible to achieve in the future. When big changes happen (such as the growth of the internet, the creation of a new government department, or an advocacy campaign), it is important to carry out an information mapping activity, not least because it helps newcomers to understand what information is available and where, and to whom it should be disseminated.

## Identifying challenges and priorities

**Reviewing challenges** enables the group to identify overall issues and (by discussing and agreeing on these issues) to assign a priority for each one.

**Objective:** to simplify a complex situation and begin to develop an agenda for change and development.

The group is encouraged to do a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis at this point, in order to review current communications among the Joint UN Team on AIDS. The same process should be repeated to examine and analyse external communications to non-UN partners and stakeholders.

This exercise aims to identify the following:

- strengths of current communications;
- weaknesses of current communications;
- opportunities for the future; and
- threats if communications fail.

A SWOT analysis is a good choice of method if the group needs to think of positive, as well as negative aspects of the issue and to work on understanding communications. Ideally, a SWOT analysis should be undertaken first to discover what the overall information challenges are. However, SWOT analysis is a commonly used tool and the group may prefer something different. If so, skip straight to the challenge analysis using the following method.

1. Divide the participants into pairs and give each pair a pile of idea cards (at least 10 cards per pair).
2. Ask each pair to draw up a list of 10 challenges that they might face when dealing with information as a Joint Team, putting each idea on a separate idea card.
3. Ask the pairs to 'pair up' again, to form groups of four people and combine their ideas so they have one set of unique ideas.
4. Ask the groups to join together again to form two large groups. Ask these groups to combine all the ideas and to list them in order of difficulty.
5. Ask each group to present their ideas and combine their results to give a list of challenges listed in order of difficulty.

6. Together pick the top three **priority** challenges (not difficulty).
7. Get the groups to agree on a combined and prioritized of challenges.

**Note:** the lists should include ‘Getting organizations to agree about information and messages’.

## What works now?

Returning to the information map created in section 4.2 *Mapping communications and information*, hand out the question sheet (below) and allocate the main methods of communicating among the participants. (Again, this process must be undertaken for each strategy, to address both internal and external communications).

Groups will need some time to answer all the questions for their given communications method. Less obvious methods (such as, face-to-face, e.-mail, meetings, etc.) should be included as well as newsletters, posters, etc.

### Name of information mechanism:

.....

### Description of main messages and information carriers

- How do you rate this mechanism in terms of its suitability for the information? (1 is the least suitable and 10 is the most suitable).

[1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10]

- Name at least three things that you think are good about this mechanism.
- Name at least three things that you think can be improved for this mechanism.
- Should this mechanism be used in the future?

**Yes**                      **No**

- If yes, how will it change the situation?
- If yes, what will be the benefits?
- If yes, what will be the problems?
- If yes, how can this mechanism be monitored and evaluated?
- If no, what should replace it for carrying the information?

When the groups have finished, ask them to present their results.

**Conclusion: from the work completed in this first step, participants should be able to identify the following.**

- A picture of what is happening now.
- A picture of what should be happening.
- A picture of existing challenges.
- Communications mechanisms to keep.
- Communications methods to consider dropping.
- Changes that need to be made to existing methods.
- Ideas about new communications methods.

## Appendix 2. Tools for investigating audiences

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### Observation

This is the most common way to gather information about audiences cheaply and quickly.

- Talk with people who are familiar with the group or individual that makes up the audience.
- Gossip: talk with other advocates and colleagues. This is especially helpful in learning what audiences really think about issues; their true opinion may be different from their official position.
- Read speeches or other documents written by key organizations or individuals.
- Review the results of recent polls, surveys or focus groups.
- Attend open meetings where the group or individual will be speaking or participating.

### Interviews

- Conduct interviews with representative individuals if you cannot afford to do a survey, poll or focus group.
- Limit questions to a few topics and be sure that the people being interviewed are truly representative of your audience.

### Surveys/polls

- Survey techniques are generally used to learn about large audiences such as ‘voters’, ‘parents’ or ‘youth’.
- Ask about surveys or polls that might be planned by donor agency projects, the media or advertising firms to which you might add a few questions related to your issue.
- Polls or surveys should be conducted by organizations that the primary audience would find credible.

### Focus groups

- Focus groups give an in-depth perspective on what people think and why. This method is particularly useful in testing policy messages.
- Limit discussion to a few, narrow topics.
- Participants should come from similar backgrounds and share similar characteristics such as age, gender, etc., so that they will feel comfortable stating their true feelings.

### Finding out who your audiences are

Objective:	
Primary audience 'Targets'	Secondary audience
1.	1. 2. 3. 4.
2.	1. 2. 3. 4.
3.	1. 2. 3. 4.
4.	1. 2. 3. 4.

**Finding what your audiences know and think**

**Objective** .....

Primary audience	Audience knowledge about issue/objective	Audience beliefs and attitudes about issue/objective	Issues that the audience cares about (may be unrelated to your issue)



## Appendix 3. Tools for message development

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### Outlining messages

It will be necessary to fill in a number of the following forms: one for each message or target audience, depending on which has more options in the current circumstance. It is possible to revisit this form at later points in the strategy if messages or circumstances change.

Target audience	
Action you want the audience to take	
Message content	
Messengers	
Time and place of delivery	

## Questions to explore

During the message outlining process, it is useful to review the questions outlined below.

Steps you can take	Questions to explore
Design a message that tells your story	Have you addressed the what, why, and impact of your policy proposal? Have you thought about how your audience is likely to receive your message? How can you simplify your message?
Know your target audience	Have you considered the following about your target audience? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their interests?</li> <li>• What they already know?</li> <li>• Whether they already have an opinion?</li> <li>• What objections they might have?</li> <li>• Their personal interests?</li> <li>• Any bias suggested by their background?</li> </ul>
Network for information	Have you asked people within your organization for information, contacts and ideas? Have you asked your external contacts for information, contacts and ideas?
Check your message for clarity	Will your target audience know exactly what to do next if they agree with you? Have you used accessible language that is free of jargon? Are the benefits of your proposal clear?
Establish or reaffirm your credibility	Have you developed some expertise in the issue? Do you have documentation? Have you picked the best messenger?
Reinforce messages	Have you tried to respond to any concerns expressed by your audience? Have you delivered your message more than once? Have you adapted your message based on the latest information? Have you thanked your audience for their attention or assistance?
Pick the best format	What format is most likely to reach your target audience? What format will best enable you to tell your story?

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UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, brings together the efforts and resources of ten UN system organizations to the global AIDS response. Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Based in Geneva, the UNAIDS secretariat works on the ground in more than 80 countries worldwide.

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