COMMUNICATING PROGRESS + RESULTS

ON SDG ACCELERATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

JOINT SDG FUND

Introduction

ABOUT THE JOINT SDG FUND

The Joint SDG Fund offers United Nations Country Teams a unique opportunity to launch collaborative initiatives, promote integrated approaches, and channel strategic investments to accelerate the SDGs and, ultimately, lead to achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

The Joint SDG Fund supports countries to accelerate their progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to deliver on the commitment of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind. Providing a new generation of Resident Coordinators (RCs) and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) with a critical instrument to incentivize the adoption of new solutions for longer-term sustainability.

The Guide is a living document that outlines the communications messages, audiences, content, channels, partnerships, branding, resources, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting requirements for the Joint SDG Fund communications plans.

All regional and country-level should develop a Communications Strategy according to country context. The Joint SDG Fund is here to support in the development of the plan.

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All guidance and tools referenced in the Guide are available in the [Branding Guidelines and the Style Guide.](#)

WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Communicating joint programme results, progress, challenges, and practices well is as integral to success as collaboration or network building across various organizations, sectors, and locales. Effective communication plays a critical role by:

- Improving participation levels and empowering stakeholders working on development issues (particularly linked to global frameworks like the SDGs and 2030 Agenda).
- Lobbying behind and/or promoting initiatives that are efficient, effective, inclusive, and sustainably shape or transform development finance policy and practice.

Strong communication relies on collaboration, mapping, strategic planning, transparency, innovation, creativity, and embedding communication and advocacy practices into joint programmes from the outset (throughout the project cycle from the design to implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management, data aggregation and analysis, etc.) phases. **These practices are imperative to the success of a joint initiative**, Joint SDG Fund programmes in particular. Our mission is to accelerate SDG achievement using collaborative, context-relevant, and transformative efforts that changes the way the United Nations "does" development.

These days, storytelling and authenticity is at the centre of the many successful business strategies. When information and messages are crafted and/or tailored for various audiences and contexts it **improves transparency and accountability**, **establishes communities of practice**, **manages expectations**, offers opportunities to **rethink ways of cataloguing, storing and using data and information**, and **incentivizes stakeholders** to take ownership of the processes that foster transformative, comprehensive, and durable change.

Contextually-relevant communication and advocacy practices are necessary for any organization or business—and joint ventures are no exception. To make sure communication is organized, clear, and consistent guidelines on requirements or tasks can prove useful in course charting or redirecting. This is why the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat has released a set of communication and advocacy guidelines that

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are in line with UNDCO practices. This way, Offices of the Resident Coordinator, UNCT members, and country/regional professionals do not spend precious time speculating how to communicate progress, results, or improve communication functions.

WHY ADHERE TO GUIDELINES?

Why not? These procedures can be applied to any programme or project and help improve the quality and reach of your progress, achievements, and results. A set of steps or procedures to follow organizes workflow along with the monitoring and feedback processes. They help communication functions run smoothly because tasks can be broken down according to country level needs, lead to the creation of communication-specific budget lines, and assign responsibilities to specific focal points for prioritization, implementation, troubleshooting, course correction, and follow-up.

All partners working directly on Joint SDG Fund-supported initiatives should embed communication approaches in their joint programmes.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

HOW TO CREATE COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Dedicated focal point(s) for communication

Designate responsibilities

Develop a communication action plan

Allocate a budget for communication

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Dedicated focal point(s) for communication

Where possible—and if the size of the programme justifies it—a dedicated Communication Officer, Specialist, or Consultant should be hired to handle communication and advocacy functions for the duration of the Joint SDG Fund programme. In cases where this is not possible the UNCT should, as minimum, select a dedicated focal point to carry out communication and advocacy functions (e.g. this person may be from the lead agency of the joint programme).

The dedicated focal point should be intensively supported by programme communication staff in the Office of the Resident Coordinator (RCO) since each will be staffed with a communication specialist as of 2019. In the event a UN Country Team is unable to identify a focal point, the programme communication person from the RCO may be asked to take on the role temporarily and report to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat until alternative arrangements can be made. If not situated in the RCO they should, ideally, sit in one of the participating UN organizations (e.g. UNICEF, UN Women, ILO, UNFPA, etc.).

Communication focal point responsibilities

The communication focal point will be responsible for communication and advocacy functions pertaining to the Joint SDG Fund programme. At the outset the focal point for the joint programme should, informally, establish a communication team or link up with an existing group that focuses on communication. This team/group should, where it makes sense, be made up of members of the United Nations Communication Group (UNCG) or relevant focal points from participating UN organizations. In addition to the UN, it is critical to involve communication focal points from local partners/stakeholders be they from the government, private sector, or local organizations.

Members of the team/group should play an ongoing and active role in designing and implementing the communication action plan for the joint programme. Having a network of communication professionals to tap into is an important not only because collaboration is central to Joint SDG Fund operations, but because it lays the groundwork for having programme and communication positively reinforce each other. Additionally, it incites ownership of programme processes and outcomes, increases the overall outreach and effects of activities, and spreads the workload and encouraging the creation and sharing of quality content.

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The group tasked to oversee communication and advocacy for Joint SDG Fund programmes at the country level should meet, at minimum, once every quarter to revisit the communication strategy and make modifications (where applicable), and to monitor progress. Members will be invited to actively engage in a virtual network created by the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat (TBD, e.g. Yammer, e-mail list, other online platform) to connect communication focal points around the world and serve as a place for users to share experiences, troubleshoot, bounce ideas off each other, and stimulate healthy competition across countries.

Allocate a budget for communication

UNCTs supported by the Joint SDG Fund are expected to allocate a minimum of 3% - 5% of the joint programme operational budget for communications and advocacy functions.

Develop a communication action plan

A plan for communication and advocacy helps UNCTs and stakeholders align their efforts with approaches that promote integrated and collaborative actions, and lead to transformative and sustainable results. Specific activities and approaches to communication and advocacy should be included in the plan/strategy to illustrate how the joint initiative communication can result in:

- Creating new and inclusive communication networks for programme stakeholders that reinforce the importance of shared responsibility and mutual accountability.
- Advocacy, policy changes, and more lobbying around the achievement of the SDGs or raising awareness about the 2030 Agenda (e.g. countries reaching the SDGs is how we succeed in fulfilling 2030 Agenda).
- Spurring deep social change and shifts in attitude, which advance programme objectives.
- Raising the profile of relevant SDGs and issues in a specific country or region.
- Improved communication of challenges, successes, and results that lead to scaled up activities and/or project integrity and sustainability.
- Policy outcomes that place the SDGs and 2030 Agenda at the centre of national development efforts and create new networks for governments, civil society, the private sector, and others.

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The action plan should be developed during the design phase of the joint programme. Depending on the context, each communication focal point/team will identify different tools, approaches, and methods of communication. Think of the action plan as a living document that outlines communication and advocacy-related activities and results, and that is updated annually…if not biannually. To help communication teams develop their plans the following template has been provided.

MISSION STATEMENT (1 paragraph)	Summarize: Purpose of programme/initiative communications. What is the intended effect/reach? What issues will be covered? How will it prime all stakeholders for success?	AIMS/RESULTS (1 – 3 paragraphs)	Summarize expected outcomes/results of joint programme communications and advocacy.
BACKGROUND (max. 1 page)	Brief narrative about the current situation, providing the backdrop for why the joint programme is being implemented.	AUDIENCES (½ page)	Who are your audiences? Identify and categorize.
CHALLENGES (½ page)	List anticipated challenges when implementing communication and advocacy activities.	OBJECTIVES + AIMS/GOALS (max. 1 page)	What are the expected outcomes of using specific communication and advocacy methods, tools, and activities? Ultimately, how will communication/advocacy tactics help achieve joint programme aims at local and national levels (and, possibly, beyond)?

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ACTIVITIES **(2 – 3 pages)**	What materials, tools, tactics, and instruments, will be employed to report on, promote, and share information pertaining to the joint programme? ! Be mindful of the availability and reach of certain activities (e.g. social media). Use those that can be monitored and/or will progress overall aims. A min. of **2** activities should employ innovative approaches or ways to engage with audiences.	**DATA** **AGGREGATION,** **ANALYSIS + USE** **(max ½ page)**	Where (if at all) are the data gaps in-country? Can new ways of data collection be used to boost programme
KNOWLEDGE **MANAGEMENT** **(½ page)**	! As communication and knowledge management are two areas that draw on different skill sets this section should be relatively generic. How will information (generated the programme, communication aspects in particular) be collected, indexed, accessed, and shared?	**VISIBILITY** **STANDARDS** **(½ page)**	Joint programmes must adhere to Joint SDG Fund visibility and brand standards, as well as those of participating donors. This may also apply to stakeholders at the national level. Outline briefly what standards exist and how they will be upheld by the joint programme and partners.
MONITORING + **EVALUATION**	How will you monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of	**NETWORKS** **(½ page)**	List partners for communication and

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| (max. 1 page) | communication/advocacy actions? | | advocacy functions with assigned roles + responsibilities. |

We want to inspire and engage. Thinking strategically and creatively because good communication leads to better programme alignment, stronger collaborations, and greater reach among programme partners, United Nations colleagues, and anyone else who wants to be a part of your innovative initiative.

Additional outline for further support:

01	MISSION STATEMENT (1 paragraph)	Summarize purpose of programme/initiative. What is the intended effect/reach? issues covered? How will comms prime stakeholders for success?
02	AIMS/RESULTS (1-3 paragraphs)	Summarize expected outcomes/results of programme communications and advocacy.
03	BACKGROUND (max 1 page)	Brief narrative about the current situation and why the joint programme is being implemented.
04	AUDIENCES (½ page)	Who are your audiences? Identify and categorize.
05	CHALLENGES (½ page)	List anticipated challenges when implementing communication and advocacy activities.
06	OBJECTIVES + AIMS/GOALS (1 page)	How will communication and advocacy tactics help achieve joint programme aims at local and national levels (and, possibly, beyond)?
07	ACTIVITIES (2-3 pages)	What materials, tools, tactics, and instruments will be employed to report on, promote, and share information about the programme?
08	DATA AGG, ANALYSIS + USE (max ½ page)	Where (if at all) are the data gaps? Can new ways of data collection be used to boost results?

09	KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (½ page)	Basic outline of how information will be collected, indexed, accessed, and shared?
10	VISIBILITY STANDARDS (½ page)	Joint programmes must adhere to Joint SDG Fund visibility and brand standards, as well as those of participating donors.
11	MONITORING + EVALUATION (1 page)	How will you monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of communication/advocacy actions?
12	NETWORKS (½ page)	List partners for communication and advocacy functions with assigned roles + responsibilities.

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Joint SDG Fund communications officers should focus on developing creative, relevant and high-quality content to feed their communications channels. Content development efforts should centre around the following content types outlined below. Specific guidance has been developed for each content area. Click on the link for more information on each area.

⇒ **Stories:** Impactful stories of the joint programme should shine a light on the beneficiaries and the impact the joint programme has on the community. This programme is unique fostering a One UN model as Agencies work together. It is important to highlight Agency collaboration. The direction of positive impact stories is sought out according the global communications of the United Nations.

⇒ **Video:** Great way to amplify a message to global audiences. Video made specifically for the joint programme should be created in the countries native language and subtitled in English for a diverse audience. Size of the video should be sharable on social media platforms — is the main driver of message sharing.

⇒ **Photography:** High-quality photographs and images are critical components of any website or social media story. If there are already created albums from Agencies in the country, please share with the communications focal point to avoid generic images.

⇒ **Infographics:** Infographics are a visual representation of data and information. Well executed infographics can depict complex ideas and issues in simple interesting way for readers to easily digest. Infographics are an important tool on social media, where audience attention spans are short.

⇒ **Print and publications:** Documents such as factsheets, banners, posters and other printed materials are assets to build on the joint programme. They are a great way to highlight the country on the website and sharing to donors. For logo usage please revert to the Style Guide.

⇒ **Official communications:** such as joint, interagency and regional press releases, statements and media advisories. Communications focal points should coordinate the drafting and development of official communications related to the Joint SDG Fund.

When communicating processes and results, the methods, tools, instruments, and materials will vary according to country. Content should be tailored to the social, cultural, and linguistic context of a country and be easy enough to change so it can be used by various stakeholders and across many channels. Special consideration should be placed on the communication methods used by marginalized and vulnerable groups.

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Every Joint SDG Fund initiative should develop an archive of data, information, publications, human-interest stories, visual narratives, and videos that showcase the how joint programmes have accelerated progress towards the SDGs and 2030 Agenda. Linked to this is establishing and updating a centralized database/home for archiving content, which facilitates the dissemination and use of communication and advocacy products by programme stakeholders and the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat.

Several communication materials or products are mandatory and must be submitted to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat. However, to effectively and substantively communicate in a timely manner UNCTs should agree on, and include in communication plans, **a minimum of six online and offline communication practices relevant to the local context**. Narrative content should be story-driven, useful for stakeholders, engaging, accessible, and can easily be modified for use across various channels.

Examples of tools/approaches/practices may include, but are not limited to:
- Convene advocacy or liaison groups focused on strategic policy and/or "financing for development."
- Establish, promote, and maintain information-sharing platforms (e.g. Yammer) so stakeholders can share information in timely and efficient ways.
- Create audience engagement plans.
- Write or commission human interest stories for internal and external dissemination.
- Update/manage active blogs.
- Update active websites.
- Create (or commission) infographics, iconography, and other visuals.
- Radio and TV spots or airtime.
- Organize and host webinars or sessions on online forums.
- Vlog or enlist an "influencer" or ambassador to vlog on behalf of the project.
- Update/manage social media platforms (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.).
- Organize awareness-raising events, fairs, and festivals.
- Use tech like QR code generation (https://www.qr-code-generator.com/), data visualization, or other methods to amplify reach.
- Audio sound bites or podcasts.
- Tell stories through photo essays or graphics.
- Create/update calendar of events, and match up important activities/milestones with global, regional, or national SDG-events/landmark occasions. Share information, content, messages, and data through the calendar over the course of the programme cycle.

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- Take the lead in, or provide materials and support to, partner campaigns and events.
- Live stream landmark occasions linked to the joint programme and engage with viewers in real-time.
- Coordinate donor visits to joint programme sites.
- Press trips.
- Media junkets.
- Identify and groom "in-house" spokespeople and public figures to be initiative ambassadors/champions and create opportunities for them to promote the fund.

You are encouraged to use innovative tools where possible and will be asked to submit high-quality communications materials to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat—human interest stories, videos, photos, and visualized content—that tell the story of the programme, progress being made, and role of stakeholders and beneficiaries.

INTEGRATE COMMUNICATION IN OTHER AREAS OF PROGRAMME

Communication practices in M&E

National ownership and the inclusion of new stakeholders is a consideration for the communication focal point. Communication indicators and outcomes should be agreed upon (and modified) throughout the joint programme so progress can be measured.

From a communication standpoint, a joint programme has achieved success if messaging, content, and outcome are memorable, sustainable, adopted by users or people external to the projects, sparks change (e.g. language use, norms, behaviours) in society, and triggers new policies, laws, and plans.

Report on results

In the design stages of the joint programme the communication focal point should give feedback on the publications needed (e.g. progress, annual, SDG, etc.) during the calendar year. All documents for publication should go through a quality assurance cycle, which aids in the creation of content that is engaging, accessible, clear, concise, and inclusive. This process may look like:

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1. Author of the document/narrative submits a finalized text that meets corporate policy and national guidelines, and has been read and edited by committees/groups for approval. After receiving feedback the author updates commentary/changes in the document, resolves issues with tables, figures, and data.

2. Check the document for typographical errors and have someone aside from the author read and provide feedback. If you hire an editor for this process, they are responsible for reading for grammar, punctuation, sense, syntax, flow, style and basic formatting. They should also verify contact details of those interviewed, references, and any hyperlinks. After the document has been edited the project focal point should review changes/suggestions.

3. Once the narrative copy is ready to go hand off to a visual design firm, team, or individual who will lay out the text and create visual elements according to your needs.

4. After the document has been laid out the proofs should be checked and cleared. At this point the publisher (who cannot make editorial changes to the document) takes over. The sole responsibility of the publisher is to check with the author and/or editor to confirm the previous steps have been followed.

Data aggregation and analysis for communication

Joint SDG Fund programmes should rely on evidence to design activities that produce results and close gaps in data. Data collection exercise should be followed by an in-depth analysis and presentation of findings for different audiences.

Although data is predominantly used for programme purposes, it can be used for strategic communication as well. Hard data is evidence and should be used to share progress, outcomes, achievements, new possibilities, and/or setbacks in programme reports, human interest stories, visualizations, etc., and shared with the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat.

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VISIBILITY AND BRANDING

For all branding information go to Branding Guidelines Resources page on the Joint SDG Fund's website.

UNCTs, and partners, that receive an allocation from the Joint SDG Fund are responsible for adhering to our branding and visibility standards. The Joint SDG Fund brand manual is available.

The logo of the Joint SDG Fund should always be used in project communications alongside the UNDS country logo. Where possible, include logo/flags of Fund donors (e.g. the European Union) and partner logos. If there is not enough space for all logos to be displayed in a specific document/product use the Joint SDG Fund and UNDS country logos along with a byline mentioning the donors to the Joint SDG Fund. UNCTs *and* partners must comply with this aspect of Joint SDG Fund brand guidelines. The Secretariat can provide more information to UNCTs on a case-by-case basis during joint programme implementation.

While specific aspects of a joint programme (e.g. campaign, festival, etc.) may call for the development of a specific visual identity, the brand and visibility standards of the Joint SDG Fund should not be overridden. For the sake of visibility purposes, the creation of new logos is discouraged as is using individual UN agency logos.

TOO MANY LOGOS | NOT ENOUGH SPACE

To avoid "crowding" the Joint SDG Fund logo should only be used in tandem with the UNDS logo and that of "first line" partners in joint communications. The logos of donors, secondary organizations, and partners can be featured on the inside front print cover, listed on the second or third pages of a document, and appear on the sub-page of a website in an interactive format. Doing so clearly outlines a visual hierarchy of information and recognizes the importance of every role in the programme.

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Sustainable Development Goals

1 No Poverty
2 Zero Hunger
3 Good Health and Wellbeing
4 Quality Education
5 Gender Equality
6 Clean WaterAnd Sanitation
7 Affordable and Clean Energy
8 Decent Work And Economic Growth
9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
10 Gender Equality
11 Sustainable Cities And Communities
12 Responsible Consumption and Production
13 Climate Action
14 Life Below Water
15 Life on Land
16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
17 Partnerships for the Goals

The Joint SDG Fund receives support from the
European Union and governments of:
Denmark
Germany
Ireland
Luxembourg
Monaco
The Netherlands
Norway
Portugal
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

United Nations Sustainable Development Group
Development Coordination Office
New York, New York, USA
Tel: +1 (212) 906-5125
Web: https://jointsdgfund.org

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Giving adequate recognition to every organization for their contribution is challenging but necessary. Find a way to properly credit all partners and donors (e.g. UN, Joint SDG Fund, national counterparts, and donors) in your online and offline materials, including factsheets, infographics, posters, reports, leaflets, banners, and brochures. This also extends to occasional mentions, referencing Joint SDG Fund support, or thanking stakeholders and donors on social networking platforms, in press releases, and when speaking to the media.

Branding/visibility materials

When branding general promotional materials or spaces only use the name of the project along with Joint SDG Fund and UNDS country logos. Where possible, include a byline listing the donors and all other active partners. Examples include pens, stickers, notebooks, clothing (campaign tote bags or t-shirts).

For all branding information go to the [Branding Guidelines](#) provided.

Visibility requirements throughout the programme

From the inception of a joint programme through to its conclusion, communication focal points from the UN, implementing partners, and stakeholders are encouraged to promote the processes, progress, interesting details, challenges, and results of a Joint SDG Fund-supported initiative. Partners should be in frequent contact with the UN communication focal point at country-level, and that UN focal point should be in frequent contact with Joint SDG Fund Secretariat.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The UN Joint SDG Fund embraces the use of social and online digital media to reach, inform, communicate with, and advocate for accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Agenda mainstreaming intersectional issues like human rights, gender, youth, the environment and people with disabilities.

Objectives

1. Increase engagement with Joint SDG Fund content on social media
2. Grow social media audiences on various channels

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3. Promote stories, programmes and events that position the Joint SDG Fund and its partners as credible and visible actors in accelerating SDG gains and mainstreaming intersectional issues like human rights, gender, youth, the environment and people with disabilities.

Secretariat Social Media Channels

- Twitter **@JointSDGFund**
- Facebook **Joint SDG Fund**
- LinkedIn **The Joint SDG Fund**

Content and Messaging

What to post?

⇒ **Purpose**

Social media channels can be used for the following: **highlight and and raise awareness** on Joint SDG Fund programmes and initiatives by publicizing data and supportive facts and creative messaging to key audiences; **illustrate and and promote the impact and results of Joint SDG Fund programmes and interventions** by sharing and promoting the content and stories; and **ensure visibility for the Joint SDG Fund, its donors and partners** by coordinating branding, high-profile endorsements from senior members of UNCTs and governments, media placements, and events and campaigns.

⇒ **Language**

Social media copy should be **thought-provoking, well-written and knowledge-based**, and with **appealing and easily accessible** content that is not too technical or vague. Avoid using long statements and sentences, instead, summarize and distil content where necessary and link to longer content, news, stories, etc. **Watch the tone of voice**, which is how the character of your organisation comes through in your words, both written and spoken. Although you might be expressing sensitive and serious content, consider coming across informative and positive, and adding a call to action to incite change. The Joint SDG Fund initiatives are a result of a collective effort from donors and implementing partners, therefore mention and/or tag The Joint SDG Fund socials as well as relevant partners and use the relevant hashtags #LeaveNoOneBehind and #SDGFinancing. Also, consider ending written copy with a 'call to action' where appropriate.

⇒ **Images**

On average, **visual content performs 5 times better than text-based content** and is shared and engaged with more frequently. It is important to consider visual accompaniment with written messaging. Suitable imagery includes **captivating photos, videos, gifs, quote cards, infographics, etc.** When using images, consider **the context in which you're using that photo**, how it **communicates the intending message**, how **effective the photo is in prompting action** and if the photo **appeals to our emotions in an impactful way**.

⇒ **Events**

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Consider creating a **communications strategy around the event beginning with steady promotion to on the day event activity.** Prior to the event, create excitement leading up to it by **posting content relevant to the event and counting down as a means of promotion.** Make sure to list and **engage with the usernames of all relevant attendees and speakers as well as event partners**. In collaboration with the Secretariat and partners, select a hashtag if necessary, and an introduction with a selected graphic or image. During the event, **try posting every 15 minutes using phrases like 'Happening Now'**. You can post **interesting quotes, facts, calls to action and relevant links to content.** Also, re-post/share other accounts tweeting from the same event. After the event, send a thank you to those who were following along and link any event video or images to invite people to watch and share.

Tips

⇒ **Do's**

- Engage with the Secretariat channels by reposting and retweeting content
- Use the relevant hashtags of #LeaveNoOneBehind and #SDGFinancing
- Share relevant content from the Joint SDG Fund website, initiatives, programmes, events, articles etc.
- Highlight local Joint Programme initiatives and work
- Use good quality images that you have the rights to use from credible photo sources (UN photo website)
- Create engaging content like infographics, social media cards and videos
- Interact and engage with the Secretariat and partners by mentioning, tagging and linking
- Perform monitoring and evaluating content and engagement using social media analytics

⇒ **Don'ts**

- Do not post content that is politically sensitive
- Do not post in all uppercase letters or use slang terms

Social Media Terms

⇒ **Engagement** refers to any action taken by a social media user on your page. This can be in the form of 'Likes', 'Reactions', 'Shares' or 'Comments'.

⇒ **Hashtag** refers to any word or phrase that is following the '#', or hashtag, symbol. It is a way to find content about a specific topic, or as a way to make a user's content more discoverable to other users.

⇒ **Impressions** are the number of times your posts have been seen by users on social media. For example, if five people have seen your post that means you have five impressions for that post.

⇒ **Shares** refer to the number of times any user's piece of content has been re-posted on social media. 'Share' is a clickable button that allows you to repost other users' content to your own timeline. On twitter this is known as a **'Retweet'**.

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⇒ **Story** is on either Twitter or Facebook and is a collection of photos or videos compiled into one album that can be shared with other users on the platform.

United Nations Ground Rules

As international civil servants, staff members are required to be mindful at all times that their conduct on social media must be consistent with the principles set out in the United Nations Charter, and must comply with the United Nations Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, Status, basic rights and duties of United Nations staff members, and with the Media Guidelines for United Nations Officials. As international civil servants, staff have a duty to be and appear to be both independent and impartial. As such, staff must ensure that the expression of their personal views and convictions on social media does not adversely affect their official duties, reflect poorly on their status as international civil servants or call into question their duty of loyalty, impartiality and responsibility to the Organization.

STORYTELLING

Writing compelling and powerful stories takes skill and is important for connecting your audiences, capturing their attention and sparking their imagination. A variety of messages and content should be crafted that speak to the different audiences your programme caters to. All should be clearly articulated. Telling the right stories at the right time can improve initiative transparency and accountability, establish communities of practice, manage expectations, incentivize stakeholders, and inspire others.

Know your plot and purpose

Before writing, have a clear idea of your audience(s). Consider what they know along with their blind spots so you can effectively fill the gaps and/or come up with savvy ways of spreading your influence. Once the audiences are clear determine the purpose or "takeaway" messages of your piece. This is the primary information you want to share with others because it informs or persuades, and leads you towards an ending that sticks with people long after they have finished reading or viewing your product.

Keep it simple and (ideally) short

Know how and where your stories will be circulated. Individual tweets should be less than two sentences, social media captions should be no more than 60 to 70 words, for a blog post keep it to 500 – 900 words, and try not to punch above 2,500 words for a human interest piece. People

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Regardless of how long your story runs write in a simple, concrete and "active" way. Try to set aside enough time in the writing cycle for three to four edits/drafts. Why? Because every subsequent edit will result in getting rid of unnecessary words and unimportant content, making your stories tighter, lighter, and grammatically stronger.

Be creative in your process

Jot down your ideas on a storyboard or Post-Its. Read other articles or stories, listen to music, watch a performance, or go for a walk to get inspiration. Where possible, include the feedback and experiences of others your narratives by interviewing people involved with the project or who know about it.

Consider including photos, images, graphics, GIFs, video or audio to strengthen your piece and break up the flow of text.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND PHOTO ESSAYS

Quality, high resolution photographs are non-negotiable. They show how projects, spin-offs and scaled up initiatives have affected the lives of the people involved. Strong photos address development needs, highlight programme efficiency and effectiveness, and emphasize the accountability of the stakeholders involved.

The strongest images draw people in because they succeed in telling a story only using visual language and connect the viewer with the people or environments featured in the shot. At least two quality photos should be included in the annual report to MPTFO or any internal communication materials like human interest stories, or summary/flash reports. Where possible, consider hiring a professional photographer at the outset to build a portfolio of images you can build on.

Photography 101

Choose your subject(s) | The human brain is complex when taking in and filtering information. Too much leads to an overwhelmed software. Too little results in distracted and bored neurons looking for their next hit.

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To avoid creating generic photos that feature too few or many information points, focus on your main subject(s). This could be a single person or group of people, a panoramic shot of a rice field before a storm or a school being built. Apply the [rule of thirds](#) to your photos and, when possible, send both horizontal and vertical options.

Mix it up! | Diversity in your shots is important so consider mixing it up with close-ups, landscapes, action shots, macro, portraits, and more. Your images should best showcase programme processes and results. Photos used alongside written content should complement the narrative.

What story are you telling? | Every image has the capacity to tell a story. Instead of forcing a "moment" on your subjects try waiting a few seconds for the clouds to shift, the sun to lower in the sky another degree, the next set of waves to crash on the shore, or another group of people to cross the street. Instead of focusing on inanimate objects try to capture moments that are "alive" and, when involving people, convey our collective resilience, spirit, connectivity, dignity, hope, and desire for a better tomorrow.

Ask permission | Anyone featured in a photo should sign an image authorization form. When it comes to children or people unable to give their authorization this can be gotten from a guardian.

Focus | Blurry and granulated images are best suited for editorial fashion campaigns or art galleries and will not be used. If a photo is out of focus try again.

Caption and credit | The caption should give the viewer context and include the location, names of people in the image, and a one-line explanation of what is taking place. To ensure the proper copyright protocols are followed also include the following: name of photographer, organization, and year of photo.

Quality control | Save and upload photos in high quality image formats. Industry standard gravitates towards .raw and .tiff/.tif, followed by .jpeg and .png. Depending on the platform used by the Secretariat to archive photos, credit and caption information can be directly added in a specific field at the time of uploading or in a separate document.

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