

Report of the Annual Meeting of the UN-REDD Programme   
Communications Working Group

20 November 2014   
International Environment House, Geneva, Switzerland

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# Objectives of meeting:

* Strengthen Communications Working Group
* Strengthen One UN approach to delivery of Communications work area across three collaborating UN agencies
* Coordinate Communications activities – share draft 2015 work plans (even preliminary plans if available)
* Explore opportunities for supporting KM strategy and activities in 2015
* Define publication protocols
* Explore options for strengthening newsletter
* Reflect on website functionality and structure – what works/what needs improving
* Prioritize key global and/or joint Communications activities for 2015
* Begin developing theory of change for Communications 2016-2020 strategy
* Options for developing quality UN-REDD Programme photo library
* Innovation brainstorming – if you could, what Communications activities would you want to implement?

Agenda**:** [available here](http://www.unredd.net/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=13890&Itemid=53)

**Number of persons attending:** 10

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NAME** | **ROLE** | **BASED** |
| 1 | Jennifer Ferguson-Mitchell | Communication Officer (UN-REDD) | Geneva |
| 2 | Madeline West | Communications/KM Associate (UN-REDD) | Geneva |
| 3 | Mark Grassi | Document Manager/ Editor (UN-REDD) | Geneva |
| 4 | Dearbhla Kheegan | Communications/KM (UN-REDD/UNDP) | New York |
| 5 | Denise Martinez | Communications/KM (UN-REDD/FAO) | Rome |
| 6 | Mihaela Secrieru | Communications (UN-REDD/UNEP) | Nairobi |
| 7 | Suzannah Goss | Communications (UN-REDD/UNEP) | Nairobi |
| 8 | Avishan Chanani | Communications (UNEP FI) | Geneva |
|  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Linda Mumoki | Webmaster (UN-REDD) | Nairobi |
| 10 | Julia Hoeffmann | Communications (UNORCID) | Jakarta |

Overview of sessions**:**

(All sessions were organized as group discussions)

1. **Welcome and introductions**

*Reflection on One UN approach of the programme, and value of partners, value of coming together*

1. **Shifting Landscape -- UN-REDD programme 2016-2020 strategic framework and new KM-Communications relationship**
2. New strategic direction 2016-2020
3. Increased KM needs and implications for both KM and communications teams.

**Needs, Implications, Opportunities, Challenges**

* How can Communications support these objectives using the tools and capacities we have?
* What challenges do we face?
* How can we adapt our tools to meet the KM needs and new Strategic objectives?

1. **Programme’s 2020 Strategy:**

* Driven by *country needs*
* Support partner countries to meet *UNFCCC requirements*, in order to generate results-based payments for results-based actions
* *Scale up* REDD+ readiness to REDD+ implementation
* New partners countries coming on board -- varying knowledge levels
* *One UN approach* strengthened – working as one – one point of contact for countries
* Connect REDD+ actions to *achieving Sustainable Development*
* Strengthened *Knowledge Management* to build countries’ capacities

**Implications**

* Work Areas / REDD+ Topics redefined
* New key messages
* New audiences
* Varying levels of information needs (new countries vs. experienced countries)

1. **Increased Knowledge Management needs, implications**

* Space on website to highlight KM
* Newsletter – space for knowledge sharing (eg. Lessons learned, interviews with REDD+ focal points)
* New KM related publications – new templates / publication schedules
* Quality assurance/ Consistent approach – Style guide emphasized
* Produce videos – assist with sourcing crews, editors, script writing, etc.
* Consistent messaging – development of key messages on key topics
* Targeted communications --- help identify target audience
* KM news out through the social media channels – Twitter, Facebook
* Capacity for Translations – centralized translation budget/service

**Comms opportunities related to KM:**

* Capturing stakeholder REDD+ experiences
* Gathering soundbites from key stakeholders
* Share regional knowledge needs with us so that we can be more strategic about what we are communicating

**Comms challenges related to KM:**

* Formalize processes for clarity among increased team members?
* More work – do we have the capacity? Do we want to recommend regional Comms positions to support 2016-2020 strategy?

**Additional comments:**

* Communications has a role to play in video production, and has experience and relationships. This is not just the job of the KM team when it comes to proposed KM related videos.
* Mark is now managing pool of translators, so Jennifer is now looking at having a centralized translation budget for KM and Comms products
* From a branding perspective, do we want to highlight KM as one of our selling points?
  + Once we have the structure and momentum
* Newsletter as a space for knowledge sharing
  + - Instead of reporting on past events etc., we can be more forward looking and include KM lessons and opportunities for gaining and sharing knowledge
* The UN-REDD Programme has a style guide; Mark will be developing an adapted style guide for the workspace because so many people will be contributing to it

**Communications support and quality control**

* Relationship workflow
* What are the pros and cons of merging KM and communications working groups?
  + - Pros: info sharing, time efficiency, strategic planning (we have to be on the same page), strengthens KM/comms relationship and the value of the links, shared understanding, brings a regional voice to this group
    - Cons: pros are assuming that we will get what we want from their participation. We may lose oversight and control of communications-specific decisions. Not all decisions related to KM, how would comms-specific organizational decisions be made. Confusion over decision-making authority of regional KM consultants in decision making needs of overall UN-REDD Programme. Should they be in the KM working group, or only agency KM focal points?.
      * We need clear roles, processes and strategic objectives for everyone on the working groups.
      * Concern: how do roles get defined? We need to make a recommendation about our roles in relation to the KM team.
      * **Decision: do not merge now – rather, take some time now to define roles to increase clarity**   
        **\*up reporting of regional KM coordinators needs clarity**

**Communications roles and responsibilities reaffirmed:**

* + - * + **Agency communications people (Dearbhla, Denise, Mihaela):**    
          Facilitators, coordinators within the agency HQ, and agency RTAs. Accessing experts, linking them to the secretariat
        + **Global KM specialists (KM Specialist/Jennifer):**    
          The KM specialist reports to Jennifer, and will be replaced as soon as possible, Jennifer is in this role for now.   
          Global level, non-agency specific. Reporting results and work plans (operational side) to secretariat. Budget allocation. Nexis global KM and communications.

Discussion: maybe we should have the global KM specialist work directly with regional KM specialists? This was the envisioned relationship.

* + - * + **Global communications programme (Jennifer):**   
          Coordinating all communications and KM for the programme at the global level, including social media (FB and twitter)
        + **Editor/translator (Mark):**   
          Quality control, editing and translation, developing style guide, and workspace editorial guide.  
          Specific: Newsletter editing, managing pool of translators.
        + **Web/workspace/events (Maddie):**

Helpdesk, website updates, shared events list and publication list (shared docs), design 

* + - * + **UNORCID (Julia):**   
          Sharing Indonesia specific  experiences, content sharing, collaboration and coordination, global events
        + **UNEP/FI (Avishan):**   
          Observer role in working group and collaborating partner with UN-REDD communications. We should be coordinating our communications activities now. Goes to Jennifer for support.

1. **2015 Communications Coordination and Collaboration** **-- UNDP, UNEP, FAO, UNORCID, UNEP-FI, FCPF, info share and group discussion**

* **FAO update and 2015 work plan  (Denise):**
  + Specialty publications including communications booklet series as simplified communications versions of technical products (see list from Denise)
  + Technical workshops
  + Products for varying knowledge levels
  + Technical MRV report series
  + Technical/institutional information note
  + Video animation on national forest management system
  + Updated NFMS (MRV)
  + Multi-media resources on forest monitoring (offline capabilities on CD, plus online)
  + Video interviews (Jennifer to repurpose)
  + Technical reports for (1) the development of reference levels for REDD+ (already commented on by technical focal points), (2) Zambia drivers of deforestation, and (3) case studies for legal preparedness for REDD+
  + Pacific islands workshop

* **UNEP update and 2015 work plan (Suzannah)**
  + Forest ecosystems in the Tanzania economy publication to launch in December or January
  + Mangroves publications
  + Information briefs > WCMC
  + REDD+ resource guide (UNITAR and UNEP), will integrate in our workspace
  + REDD+ law book, GCP and Thais N.
  + Ivo is drafting a paper on how UN-REDD countries can implement REDD+ in their countries
  + Video animation on charcoal production
  + Inter-agency video documentary on REDD+ in Africa coming in 2015
  + Finalizing BeRT/CAST
  + Cost/benefit spreadsheet tool
  + Case study, economics of deforestation analysis in Cambodia has been rolled out in Argentina
  + REDD+ Academy (May Argentina, July Nigeria)

* **UNDP update and 2015 work plan (Dearbhla)**
  + Government and safeguard global knowledge exchange event tentatively planned
  + Lessons learned on anti-corruption for REDD+ (Global, probably in Tunisia, governance area with safeguards group)
  + Stakeholder engagement global team looking at stakeholder engagement lessons learned publication (Gaya leading this)
  + Davos, end of January in Switzerland (Helen C.): forest focus, opportunity for promotion
  + Global community based REDD+
    - Lessons
    - Grants will likely be dispersed in January or February 2015

* **UNEP-FI update and 2015 work plan (Avishan)**
  + 3 animated videos (private sector collaboration, drivers of deforestation, role of financial institutions)
  + Re-doing website, with space for interaction infographics
  + Subsidies report with ODI
  + Fiscal incentives (Indonesia, Ecuador, Ghana, Peru)
  + Green commodity programme

* **UNORCID update and 2015 work plan (Julia)**
  + Next week COP in Lima (Brittany for communications and Felicity, Satya's assistant, are going)
  + Supporting national REDD+ agency
  + Launching legal book (GCP/UNORCID)
    - Possible UN-REDD acknowledgement
  + Events-
    - WCS- biodiversity and REDD+ (January)
    - UNODC- Toolkit on forest crime (January)
    - Dialogue series- every month. January with be forest management units with GIZ
    - Want to do a Coastal REDD+ launch in January (mangroves), see if it makes sense to translate
    - Feb: REDD+ private sector summit with UNEP and other partners, HIGH LEVEL
    - Customary tenure
    - UNODC congress in Doha, maybe present on forest crime

* **Opportunities for coordination and collaboration:**
  + UNFCCC related info being published by FAO, we can start linking in order to market the programme as taking countries to the UNFCCC track.
  + New FAO info tools for KM use.
  + Have people synthesize technical publications - video interview
  + Webinars – GoToWebinar identified
  + Publications/information linking to sustainable development
  + GCP and UNEP (Thais Narciso)
  + Coordinate global events
  + Oslo REDD+
  + Davos, end of January in Switzerland (Helen C.): forest focus, opportunity for promotion
  + Through Bangkok FAO comms (?)
  + Mike Spears might want to attend the UNORCID REDD+ private sector summit

* **Challenges to coordination and collaboration:**
  + Need for non-policy brief format for briefs (e.g. info briefs)
  + Redefined work areas
  + Strategic with video and dissemination management
  + Review of publications is not consistent, third party authors
  + Indonesia some challenges in GRASP MOU

* **Coordination:**
  + Maddie will maintain a shared list of upcoming publications
  + Maddie will maintain a shared list of upcoming events
  + Google docs for now, workspace shared docs later

**4. Publication protocols**

**To consider:**

* Current situation
* UN-REDD branded vs. non-UN-REDD branded publications
* Third-party contracted publications – not reflecting UN-REDD Programme messaging and positions
* Challenges and needs – identify and capture
* Draft creative brief – review
* Review/approval process – determine

**Current process and needs:**

* agency level policy brief as concept note (1 week to review, lead agency signs off only)
* Lessons learned publications have been written by RTAs and were a long difficult process, no KM people involved, no protocols
* Success stories: template and structure (short 4 pager)
* Technical reports: no rigid protocol, each agency has their own structure
* Fast facts flyer
* Year-end review
* Information kits (how to guides)
* Comparative experiences

**Publications initial group thoughts:**

* Suzannah: UNEP has a KM product pipeline, which is a shared doc for scheduling publications so that they aren't all coming out at the same time.
* Denise: Last year we did that same thing, we had a spreadsheet of all publications.
* Suzannah: We could incorporate release scheduling
* Avishan: In 2014 we had so many publications, the value of each needs to be questioned.
* Denise: Yesterday we were talking about a quality assurance workflow: including providing a rational, does it respond to demand?

**Additional comments:**

* Be aware that different types are geared to various knowledge levels
* Who do we list as author? Contact?
* Should the secretariat (Thais/Mirey) take accountability for final approval (at step 1 and before publication)?
* People should be coming to us before they start a publication, for help with format, language, launch and promotion timeline etc.

**Discussion outcomes:**

* Agreement that there is a need for the development of a standardized publication protocol/process and templates.
* Jennifer will incorporate comments to publication workflow document, then that draft will go to agency focal points to review as a first step.
* Will share publication workflow process with KM team for implementation by them as relevant

1. **Strengthening UN-REDD Programme newsletter**

**UN-REDD Programme newsletter: Exploring options for editorial redesign to fit evolving needs**

* Current newsletter (format, publication cycle, content)
* Reflecting on KM needs, new Strategic objectives and shared challenges and opportunities from our update session:
  + What should be the purpose of this tool?
  + Who should be the audience?
  + How can KM be integrated into the newsletter? (lessons learned, learning events, learning tools, experience sharing, etc.)
  + How can the editorial content of the newsletter be restructured to meet evolving needs?
  + What should be the design format? (print? ePub?)
  + What should be the publication cycle (monthly, quarterly?)
  + How should the Mini-RoundUp be different, so that they don’t compete with each other?

**Newsletter first thoughts:**

* Good clickthrough is 30%, UNEP-FI has 19%.
* Avishan: Are we doing the newsletter for internal or external purposes? We need to clarify.
* Denise/Dearbhla: the newsletter and roundup are competing
* Denise: roundup should be more reporting, newsletter should be more editorial
* Denise: opportunity to use videos in newsletters. Our partners do interviews and testimonial videos, and we can repurpose these for KM purposes.
* Suzannah: We need to produce some exciting news, not just report on meetings that can be put in the announcement box. Let's keep the newsletter interesting!
* What are some options for editorial redesign to better fit organizational needs?
* We are moving all subscriber and comms contact lists to constant contact
* We have about 5000 subscribers now, we need to rebuild with more contact information, so we can tell who is reading it.
* Redesigns need to be purposeful.
* Monthly is too frequent, but quarterly is not often enough – bimonthly would meet needs
* Sell programme to outsiders and share success stories.
* We know there is a need in the programme, staff want to be recorded and know their news is getting out (staff news!).

Group Discussion outputs:

* Audience:
  + Partner countries
  + Donors
  + REDD+ practitioners
  + academics
  + REDD+ staff (current main users, maybe move elsewhere for internal messaging)
* Purpose:
  + Learning/access to resources and information
  + Sharing of country experiences
  + Help people understand UNFCCC guidelines for REDD+
  + Position the UN-REDD Programme as valuable partner/resource
  + Driving tool to website and workspace
  + People want to share what they are working on
* What should the content be?
  + New innovations and tools
  + Publications/resources/tools/videos
  + Interviews with experts/ country reps / IPSs and CSOs
  + Less of the process (workshops etc) – more outputs and impacts
  + Knowledge sharing to support capacity building related to UNFCCC REDD+ guidelines

* How
  + Structure
    - Editorial design structured around audiences needs / content identified
    - Strategic but not too rigid- not enough content to fill sections that are could be too specific (e.g. MRV section, Safeguards section)
    - Segment structure> each audience
    - Conversational tone, but balanced with gravitas. Clear and easy to understand, but carrying some weight.
    - Accessible language as many readers are not English speakers
    - Introduction to publications with video intro – where relevant and possible
    - New template: include only intro text and link through to full stories on web. Keep it short!
  + Specific section options
    - Op. Ed- invite external partners (maybe an extra option for other purposes)
    - UN-REDD position news- UN-REDD in the News
    - Q&A on an issue with an expert, approaching from the audiences perspective
    - Vacancy announcements
    - Quick digest of events and learning events/workshops

* + Generating content
    - Call for articles
    - Draft t.o.c
    - Providing subject guidance
    - Decide based on timing (what will be most useful for readers and when)
    - Themes
    - **Decision make to make the Newsletter a bi-monthly publication**

* Mini-roundup
  + Only goes to Workspace community
  + Weekly
  + Info on new information and knowledge uploaded to the Workspace
  + Need to redesign

* Next step: Jennifer will do concept brief on the new newsletter taking this all into account and begin developing the new e-template.

1. **Website upgrade**:

**Strengthening website: functionality and editorial content**

* Current functionality – explore what works, what doesn’t
* New functionality -- consider evolving needs of Programme – what new functionality options can we consider?
* Current editorial content -- What is still relevant and what is not?
* New editorial content – should we create new editorial spaces for new public-facing content that reflects new objective/outputs of Programme

Due to time constraints, the group made the decision to take this issue up in a follow-up Comms Working Group meeting.

1. **Photo library:**

**Building a photo library: harnessing our capacities**

* Info share of each agency’s photo library – quality, accessibility, etc.
* Opportunities for photo shoot in each region to capture evergreen images
* Other opportunities to cost-effectively collect quality images – photo contest, user rights from other organizations (e.g. CIFOR, WWF)

The group identified this as an important and timely area of focus, but due to meeting time constraints, the group made the decision to take this issue up in a follow-up Comms Working Group meeting.

Summary of Key Meeting Decisions and Outcomes**:**

* Reinstate centralized translation budget and capacity for key publications
* Do not merge Communications Working Group and KM Working Group at this time
* Clarify up-reporting of KM Regional Coordinators
* Establish written publication workflow process – agreed upon by all three agencies
* Redesign newsletter to better reflect UN-REDD Programme and to better meet audience needs and strategic objectives
* Publish newsletter every two months
* Update list of types of UN-REDD Publications
* Clarify difference between purpose and audience of Newsletter and MiniRoundup
* Invest in developing image library
* Collaborate with KM colleagues by promoting KM through communications channels and providing Communications expertise
* Ensure quality assurance/ consistent approach to delivery of Communications across the Programme
* Commitment to coordinate events and publications

Meeting Action items**:**

* 2015 Event information to be sent to Maddie – Dearbhla, Denise, Mihaela (and others as relevant)
* Create 2015 event calendar – Maddie
* 2015 planned publication info to be sent to Maddie -- Dearbhla, Denise, Mihaela (and others as relevant)
* Create 2015 publications calendar – Maddie
* Create centralized, budgeted translation capacity – Jennifer/Mark
* Roster of editors shared with members of Communications Working Group – Mark
* Africa video -- follow up with production team to ensure interagency collaboration -- Jennifer
* Schedule of regional workshops planned for 2015 – Denise to send to Jennifer and Maddie
* Develop Workspace editorial style guide -- Mark
* Develop newsletter concept brief – Jennifer
* Develop new e-newsletter template – Jennifer
* Develop mini roundup concept brief -- Jennifer
* Develop new mini roundup template -- Jennifer
* Circulate creative brief for information kit -- Jennifer
* Share sample creative brief/concept notes for FAO publications so we can borrow from their templates -- Denise
* Incorporate group recommendations for add-ons to draft publication workflow process doc – Jennifer
* Review and endorse publication workflow process on behalf of respective agency – Dearbhla, Denise, Mihaela
* Update list of publication types – Jennifer
* Update template design of publications – Jennifer
* Communications Working Group and members to define suggested relationship with KM Working Group and members.
* Communications Working Group to finalize list of UN-REDD Programme publication “types” based on meeting discussion