



**UNITED NATIONS**  
**TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**



## **Strategic Communications Plan for the United Nations Communications Group (UNCG) in Trinidad and Tobago: 2023-2026**

### **Context:**

The United Nations Communications Group (UNCG) in Trinidad and Tobago is a collaborative initiative of UN agencies and partners operating in the country. Its purpose is to promote the role of the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Trinidad and Tobago in advancing sustainable development within the framework of Agenda 2030 and the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (MSDCF), and to mobilise partnerships and action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

With the start of a new MSDCF cycle for 2022-2026, the UNCG strategy must reflect the UN's priority areas of focus for delivery under the new cooperation framework and its four thematic areas, namely: (1) Economic Resilience and Shared Prosperity (2) Equality and Well-being (3) Resilience to Climate Change and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and (4) Peace, Safety, Justice and the Rule of Law. In addition to UNCG priorities being shaped by the MSDCF, there are related imperatives for inclusion which should drive our work – including the need to engage youth and women.

An integrated approach to communications on the UN's work through the MSDCF will raise the profile of the UN in country, attach more value to the UN's role in sustainable development, open doors for new or deeper collaboration and influence behavioural change that can lead to action on the SDGs.

To ensure there was consultation on the way forward, a survey was designed for UNCG members so they could identify inputs for a new UNCG communications strategy. UNCG members from ten agencies participated in the survey from March to April, 2023.

The findings of the survey will assist in shaping the next chapter of the UNCG's strategic direction.

The findings are detailed via this SWOT analysis:

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 75% of the UNCG agrees the core mandate of the group is to promote the work of the UN</li> <li>- There was broad agreement from respondents that cost-sharing, collective media interviews and the creation of common spaces for the UN to advocate together are strong benefits via the UNCG, with a robust record of proven success in the past</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Budgetary constraints were identified by 75% of respondents as the top limitation they face in trying to participate in UNCG initiatives</li> <li>- More than 50% of respondents said their participation in UNCG is hampered by their existing agency workload</li> <li>- There is no clear sense of the UNCT giving the UNCG a specific mandate for its work</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondents identified public education on shared thematic issues such as climate change and gender equality as a new area where the UNCG should seek to mount behaviour-change initiatives</li> <li>- There is broad agreement that a deeper level of youth engagement should be integrated into the UNCG's strategic direction</li> <li>- Trinidad and Tobago is chairing the UN General Assembly for one year, which will raise the profile of the UN and its work during this MSDCF cycle</li> <li>- Room to consolidate UNCG relationship with the media and with Ministry Communications Officers</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diminished funding because of changing geopolitical priorities for donor states means funding for communications may not be part of some project budgets</li> </ul>

These findings put a clear premium on promotion of the UNCT's work via the MSDCF in a mode that allows UN agencies to share costs and speak as one voice, especially through joint media engagement and the creation of common spaces for content – a particularly budget-friendly measure given that the survey responses underscore funding challenges. The findings also indicate an appetite for thematic messaging on common causes – as opposed to a broad focus on the SDGs or a sole focus on the UNCT's work. Finally, the survey revealed the desire for a new push for youth engagement.

### **Vision:**

**A Trinidad and Tobago where people understand the importance of sustainable development and value the United Nations as a lead actor, advocate and partner in achieving the SDGs.**

### **Mission:**

To raise public visibility of the UN's causes, role and work in Trinidad and Tobago and the way the UN System's work supports the country to achieve its national development objectives, by implementing a cohesive and strategic approach to communications and advocacy.

### **Objectives, Tactics and Audiences**

- 1. Strengthen synergy between the UNCT and the UNCG, and equip and resource the UNCG to deliver**
  - Deepen linkages between the UNCT and the UNCG so the UNCT can guide the work of the UNCG and ensure the UNCG is delivering on the needs and priorities of the UNCT.
  - Establish a quarterly rotation of the UNCG co-chair position, to be elected by UNCG members. The UNCG Co-chair will come from among UNCG members, thereby strengthening ties between the UN System and the UNCG.
  - Improve UNCG planning by introducing annual UNCG retreats within the first quarter of each year at which UNCG members will assess the efficacy of past activities, update the strategy where required, agree on annual priority areas for thematic messaging, and develop a budgeted annual workplan.

- Build capacity through a minimum of two training sessions per year, to equip UNCG members and programme staff with the knowledge and skills to create effective communications and advocacy content
- Resource the UNCG early in the calendar year by having the UNCT approve a budgeted workplan by the end of the first quarter

Target audiences: UNCG, UNCT, UN Staff

## **2. Improve visibility of the UN System's impact and value among key partners**

- Familiarise key partners with the UNCT's work agenda under the MSDCF by hosting at least two in-person or virtual UNCG events annually to dialogue on the results and priorities of the UNCT
- Position the UN as a thought leader and an advocate for sustainable development through at least one issue-oriented contribution or dialogue per quarter, in mainstream media or at partner events. These issues would be partly determined by the UNCG thematic priorities for messaging for the year and the broader thematic areas of the MSDCF
- Engage like-minded partners in joint advocacy and communications by mounting at least two unified messaging campaigns each year with co-branded, shared assets

Target audiences: Government ministries and public sector agencies, international development partners, civil society

## **3. Engage youth and women on the mission to achieve the SDGs (Leave No One Behind)**

- Tap into the potential of young people to drive action on the SDGs by creating one youth education and engagement initiative annually
- Raise the profile of gender equality and existing inequalities by mounting at least one joint activity for key UN observances related to women and girls, such as International Day for Women and Girls in STEM, International Women's Day or the 16 Days of Activism

Target audiences: adolescents and youth under 25, women

## Sample Workplan

Month	Activity	Implementing Partner	Target Audience	Platform	UNCG Budget
January	UNCG Retreat	n/a	UNCG	In-person	US \$150 (food)
February	Finalisation of UNCG workplan, which includes Climate Change as a thematic messaging priority	n/a	UNCG	virtual	n/a
March	Approval of UNCG workplan	n/a	UNCT	virtual	n/a
March	Content writing training	Expert facilitator	UNCG	In-person	n/a
April	UNCG op-ed on Mother Earth Day	Trinidad Express	Development partners, public	newspaper	\$0
April	STEM workshop for secondary school girls	Smart Kids STEM Academy, UTT	Girls ages 11-15	In-person	US \$2,000  (transport, catering, tokens/certificates)
May	Launch of the Annual Results Report	n/a	Ministers, donors, permanent secretaries, implementing partners	In-person	US \$0 (RCO budgeted)

June	Smartphone video training	Expert facilitator	UNCG	In-person	\$0
June	Youth Climate Action Seminar	UWI, Flying Tree Environmental (NGO)	Youth ages 12-18	virtual	US \$250 (promotional graphics)
July	Joint Digital Campaign on Plastic Pollution	Ministry of Planning	General public	Social media	US \$400 (campaign graphics)
July	UNCT interviews on UN's work in human trafficking for World Day Against Trafficking in Persons	Media	General public	Television/radio	\$0
October	Disaster Preparedness Awareness Seminar	ODPM	General public	Online	US \$250 (promotional graphics)
October	UN Day Partners Event	n/a	Ministers, donors, permanent secretaries, implementing partners	In-person	US \$4,000
November	16 Days of Activism Media Campaign	Guardian Media Limited	General public	Television/radio/newspaper	\$0
December	Human Rights Day Art Competition	Scotiabank	Young artists ages 12-18	Virtual/in-person	US \$250 (promotional graphics; Scotiabank would sponsor prizes)

## Implementation and Monitoring

The UNCG Chair and co-Chair will monitor implementation of the Communications Strategy via the annual workplan, and update the strategy where required. Tools to be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and its associated communications activities include:

- Number of media stories published on UNCG initiatives
- Quality and angles of media stories published on UNCG initiatives, to gauge whether the reporting reflects the messaging put out by the UNCG
- Feedback surveys from participants in UNCG training sessions
- Views and impressions on social media posts
- Feedback surveys from participants in engagement initiatives
- Number of participants in engagement initiatives

**\*Amended by consensus during the UNCG Retreat 2024 on Monday, January 22, 2024**