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UN/CEFACT structure, mandate, terms of reference, and procedures

Terms of Reference for the UN/CEFACT Communication Team

Submitted by the UN/CEFACT Bureau

Summary

As part of its effort to clarify and streamline the work of UN/CEFACT, the Bureau has prepared Terms of Reference for the UN/CEFACT Communication Team which reports to the Bureau and is led by a Bureau member. This document outlines the objectives of the Communication Team and basic principles of effective communication. It also lists the responsibilities of the Team and gives examples of its activities.

This document is presented to the Plenary for noting.*

* This document is submitted in line with the Programme of work of the UN/CEFACT for 2015-2016
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I. Introduction

1. The purpose of the UN/CEFACT Communication Team, hereafter the Team, is to ensure a coherent, effective, engaging, forceful communication while at the same time allowing experts to tailor and update communications for specific audiences.

II. Objectives

A. General

- Propose and maintain UN/CEFACT's Communication Policy; and
- Provide guidance to experts with regard to communication activities they might be engaged in.

B. External communication

- Facilitate the visibility and accessibility of UN/CEFACT deliverables to all potentially interested parties and specifically to the outside, wider trading community;
- Provide and promote effective guidance on the use of UN/CEFACT deliverables;
- Promote the adoption of UN/CEFACT deliverables and the collection of feedback about their use;
- Attract and assist Heads of Delegation (HoDs) in finding new experts to contribute to UN/CEFACT's work from communities already involved in UN/CEFACT as well as from new countries and communities;
- Produce, in cooperation with the secretariat and the Bureau, promotional materials to be used for audiences within or outside the United Nations framework; and
- Prepare regular updates to the UN/CEFACT website.

C. Internal communication

- Prepare regular communications to HoDs and/or UN/CEFACT experts on recent activities and key strategic points;
- Contribute ideas to the organization of Forums; and
- Share and document best practices on internal communication initiatives.

II. Basic Principles

2. The basic principle is that UN/CEFACT, under the responsibility of the secretariat and the Bureau, should encourage effective communication on the organization and its deliverables. More specifically:

- Effective communication is clear and unambiguous;

- Effective communication is tailored to the audience. In some cases, where both technically-oriented and non-technical audiences are targeted, it might be advisable to prepare different messages – see Executive Guides on UN/CEFACT Deliverables;
 - Effective communication is coherent;
 - Effective communication is relevant and engaging; and
 - Effective communication is up-to-date; so, in a fast changing field, it may require regular updating.
3. Given the technical nature of several UN/CEFACT deliverables, participation in the Teams of experts who have been actively involved in the development of these deliverables is highly desirable.

III. Responsibilities and composition of the Team

4. The ultimate responsibility for communication and coordination remains with the Bureau. The Team will bring together all the work on communication throughout UN/CEFACT, representing all relevant work. The Team aims, on a consultative basis, to consolidate best practices and assist the relevant Vice-Chairs and, ultimately, the Bureau with effective communication.
5. Each Domain is invited to designate a regular participant to the team who is knowledgeable about the activities within UN/CEFACT related to the Domain's theme. General knowledge about communication tools and methodologies is helpful. Regional Rapporteurs are also invited to join this group. This wide participation will ensure that the communication needs of each of the Domains are represented both internally and externally. It is the responsibility of the Domains to ensure that their work is represented during the Team's meetings.
6. This Team is organized by and under the responsibility of the Bureau Member for communication. A representative from the UNECE secretariat is an ex-officio member of this Team.
7. The Team will meet at least virtually once every two months and face-to-face during Forum meetings.
8. The work of this Team includes activities to advance the above-mentioned objectives. The Team can also be consulted on all relevant communication issues.

IV. Examples of activities of the Communication Team

9. Examples include:
- Proposing a UN/CEFACT Communication Policy which supports the technical work of the experts and ensures coherence, while being adapted to communication with a wider public. The Communication Policy will provide guidance on how to develop communication instruments that address specific audiences;
 - Providing training and guidance on communication methodology to UN/CEFACT experts;
 - Developing templates and guidelines for communications;
 - Trimestral communiqué to Heads of Delegation aiming principally to provide an update on current activities. A part of this report should be dedicated to work in

progress or recently finished. Another part of this report should concentrate on any recent decisions which will have an impact on UN/CEFACT;

- Planning and proposing activities to implement UN/CEFACT's Communication Policy to the Bureau for approval;
 - Providing support for the drafting of external and internal communications by the Bureau;
 - When resources and skills are available, providing multi-lingual support to ensure that the official communication message is understandable in multiple languages;
 - Producing video clips; and
 - Addressing any concerns on how UN/CEFACT is represented publicly, including:
 - Definitions of UN/CEFACT and its components (Domains, Projects, Deliverables) on websites (such as Wikipedia); and
 - The use of titles related to UN/CEFACT on social media (such as on LinkedIn).
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