



OECD DEVELOPMENT  
COMMUNICATION NETWORK

## Who we are

The OECD Development Communication Network (DevCom) is a **unique international platform** to explore ways to **mobilise citizens for sustainable development through effective communication**.

Created in 1988, DevCom brings together **communications and public affairs managers** from government institutions, development agencies and multilateral organisations, as well as partners from civil society, philanthropy, the private sector and the communications industry.

Together, these professionals share lessons on how to **raise awareness** about development success stories and today's most pressing global challenges, including the **Sustainable Development Goals**. They collaborate to identify good practices in **promoting global citizenship** and **rebuilding trust** in international development co-operation.

DevCom is hosted by the **OECD Development Centre** in Paris, France.

## What we do

### Peer learning

Development communicators work in different settings, but have a lot to learn from one another. DevCom draws out their lessons, innovations and good practices, and helps them see how their work compares internationally.

### Events

At DevCom's regular events, participants share experiences and discuss latest trends in public attitudes to development, aid and international co-operation. They meet innovators in development communications and find partners for joint campaigns.

DevCom events are **informal and interactive**, allowing participants to test ideas and find inspiration on how to tackle their day-to-day challenges.

### Publications

DevCom's **publications, surveys and reports** provide guidance on effective public engagement, based on latest analysis and case examples. They often focus on specific audiences (e.g. youth), communications channels (e.g. social media) and themes (e.g. Sustainable Development Goals).

The publication *Engaging with the Public: 12 Lessons from DAC Peer Reviews* is a go-to reference for development communicators.

### Advocacy

DevCom is an advocate for development communication. Its work highlights the value of engaging with citizens. DevCom identifies compelling reasons for development institutions to engage more strategically and invest sufficient resources into communications.

## Why we matter

Development communication and public engagement have never been as important as they are now. Government institutions need to mobilise citizens into action for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In a complex political environment, they need to rebuild public trust in international development cooperation. They need to achieve these goals in a rapidly evolving media landscape.

DevCom is constantly updating its knowledge base on principles and good practices for effective public engagement.

## Understanding the public voice

Although public opinion polls reveal continued high levels of support for development work in general, citizens in many countries are losing trust in public institutions.

In a media landscape where “fake news”, “clickbait” and social media algorithms shape what people read, how well does the development community know its diverse audiences? And does it know how to reach them?

To address these questions, DevCom is helping its members reflect on their **listening architectures**:

- How are development institutions using **policy consultations** and new digital tools to engage and collaborate with citizens?
- How can **opinion polls, surveys and research** provide more practical insights into public attitudes?
- How can DevCom members make better use of **web analytics** to understand the state of public debate?

## **Mobilising citizens for sustainable development**

The SDGs cannot be achieved without citizens. However, citizens need the knowledge and skills to adopt sustainable behaviours. They also need opportunities and information to promote better public policies and business practices. Development communicators can help mobilise them into action.



This is why DevCom is setting up a **Peer Learning Hub for SDG Communicators**.

Linking closely with partners in the United Nations, the Hub will bring together analysis on SDG communications and public engagement, examples of good practices and innovation, and tools and resources that can help communicators achieve greater impact.

### **Aims of the DevCom Peer Learning Hub for SDG Communicators**

1. Provide a framework and principles to help communicators approach the SDGs, understand how they change the landscape and decide on priorities for public engagement.
2. Promote peer learning and collaboration by identifying good practices, innovations, lessons and challenges as they emerge.
3. Facilitate access to the resources, tools and advice being developed in the UN system, the OECD, the European Commission and elsewhere.

## Participate in DevCom

Members of the DevCom community share common values:

- international co-operation is necessary to address today's global challenges;
- development organisations have a mandate to engage with citizens; and
- peer learning is a very effective step towards better strategies and policies.

The easiest way to join the DevCom community is to participate in our events and workshops. You will join senior communicators from a range of key stakeholders (ministries, development agencies, multilateral organisations), experts on public opinion and development policies, and representatives from civil society, business and philanthropic foundations.

DevCom's work is made possible through **financial support from members**. Focal points from funders:

- meet at least once a year to decide on strategic priorities and themes for DevCom work;
- have regular opportunities to showcase their strategies and campaigns at DevCom events;
- can ask the DevCom Secretariat to organise customised events, webinars or presentations on specific themes; and
- are in touch with the DevCom Secretariat year-round, learning about latest initiatives and research.

Every two years, members choose **Co-Chairs** to guide DevCom activities.

*“The United Nations values its collaboration with DevCom and its community of communications professionals. To achieve the SDGs, we need to mobilise more people and partners than ever before!”*



Deborah Seward  
Director  
United Nations Regional  
Information Centre

*“When communicated effectively, a compelling story can help turn good ideas into good practice by engaging people, spurring them into action and effecting positive change. The DevCom network provides development communicators with a unique opportunity to share experiences and lessons with colleagues from other countries and reflect on how to make their communications even more effective.”*

Patrick Reichenmiller  
Deputy Head  
Communication Management  
Unit, SDC



*“Global Affairs Canada is working to renew Canada’s international assistance policy and funding framework that will determine Canada’s approach internationally to supporting the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. To help inform next steps, DevCom has been an invaluable resource, providing us with unique access to useful strategic guidance and lessons learned from around the world.”*



Jacqueline Théoret  
Executive Director, Strategic  
Communications, International  
Development Global Affairs  
Canada



## The OECD Development Centre

The OECD Development Centre was established in 1962 as an independent platform for knowledge sharing and policy dialogue between OECD member countries and developing economies, allowing these countries to interact on an equal footing. Today, 27 OECD countries and 30 non-OECD countries are members of the Centre. The Centre draws attention to emerging systemic issues likely to have an impact on global development and more specific development challenges faced by today's developing and emerging economies. It uses evidence-based analysis and strategic partnerships to help countries formulate innovative policy solutions to the global challenges of development.

### Find out more

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