Cover Page

Policy Title	Policy and Procedures for Publications
Document identifier	PPM/PUBLICATIONS/2024/3
Previous title (if any)	Publications Policy
Policy objective	To support coordinated, coherent and strategic publishing and ensure production of high-quality external publications that are aligned with institutional goals and corporate communication priorities.
Target audience	All UNFPA personnel creating publications as part of their job function. Details and instructions are provided for HQ personnel, and guidance is provided for regional and country office personnel.
Risk control matrix	Control activities that are part of the process are detailed in the Risk Control Matrix
Checklist	NA
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Policy owner unit	Media and Communications Branch
Approval	Link to signed approval template

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I. Purpose

The purpose of the UNFPA Policy and Procedures for Publications is to support coordinated, coherent and strategic publishing and ensure production of high-quality external publications that are aligned with institutional goals and corporate communication priorities. It has three key objectives: ensuring risk management for publications; enhancing the effectiveness of the publications themselves; and protecting institutional resources.

The policy will reinforce the objective of speaking with one voice, as set out in the UNFPA Public Information and Communications Strategy.

II. Policy

This policy outlines UNFPA's publication requirements and processes, identifies control actions to mitigate potential risks – including reputational risk, ineffectiveness and resource waste – related to the production, release and dissemination of publications. It establishes the following:

- Content that will bear the UNFPA logo and/or be posted on a UNFPA website must receive approval from a Publishing Group, and must be systematically reviewed for relevance, technical merit, audience targeting and appropriate budgeting, following the procedures indicated below. (A detailed list of exceptions to this policy is available in Section IV under definitions.)
- For content that is written for an academic/scientific publication and/or conference, which does not involve UNFPA logos or posting on a UNFPA website, and that is part of a staff member's job function at UNFPA (i.e., is not an outside activity), director-level approval, steps to ensure careful targeting and use of appropriate disclaimer language are required, following the procedures indicated below.
- For content including books and theses that do not involve UNFPA logos or posting on a UNFPA website, and that are part of a staff member's work at UNFPA (i.e., are not outside activities) approval is required by a director-level authority and the director of the Media and Communications Branch, following the procedures indicated below.

The principles in this policy apply to all UNFPA personnel engaged in creating publications, as defined in section IV of this document, as part of their UNFPA job function.

III. Procedures

A. For content that will bear the UNFPA logo and/or be posted on a UNFPA website (see definition section), approval of the relevant Publishing Group (see Annex II) is required, following the description and process below.

1. The project lead, or a principal contact person working with the project lead, must submit a publication proposal to the Publishing Group (refer to Annex III), affirming that the proposed publication is appropriately targeted and budgeted for its potential reach and impact. Writing and production of the publication cannot commence before the proposal

is submitted to, and approval is received from, the Publishing Group.[1] This enables the Publishing Group to provide substantive feedback before significant resources are invested. Proposals must indicate a director-level authority has approved work on the publication.

a. Proposals associated with Headquarters (i.e., the project lead is headquarters personnel or the publication is intended to be posted on the global unfpa.org website) must be submitted using the online Publications Proposal Form (see Annex III)), which submits applications to the Headquarters Publishing Group. The Headquarters Publishing Group reviews proposals every first Thursday of the month at 11:00 a.m. New York Time. Proposal applications must be submitted at least 48 hours prior to the Group's meeting. Any applications that come in less than 48 hours before the meeting will be reviewed the following month.
b. Where the project lead is from a regional or country office or if the intention is for the publication to be posted on a regional UNFPA website but not on the global UNFPA.org website, proposals must be submitted to Regional Publishing Groups. These are managed by the Regional Communications Advisers and establish their own templates, processes and timelines. Contact information for Regional Communications Advisers can be found on the global unfpa.org website.

2. The Publishing Groups (both Headquarters and Regional groups) must render a decision on each proposal and respond in writing to the submitting office within one month of its deliberation. This decision will be based upon the information available in the application, including: whether the proposal has a clearly outlined distribution plan; whether it follows a well-established process for quality control; whether the estimated budget allows for professional-quality editing, design, production, printing and distribution, as well as translation where appropriate; whether the audience and intended objective are clearly identified; whether the publication will fill a gap in knowledge or information about a specific topic; whether it positions UNFPA as a thought-leader in a particular area; and whether it reflects or reinforces UNFPA's current strategic communications and institutional objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan. The decision can also take into consideration any additional consultations or clarifications provided by the applicant(s).
    a. If the proposal is approved, development of the publication shall proceed.
    b. If approval is withheld pending further clarification, development of the publication cannot proceed. The project lead or principal contact person must provide written clarifications to the satisfaction of the relevant Publishing Group before approval can be granted.
    c. If approval is granted on the condition of modification, the project lead must provide written agreement to these modifications before proceeding with development.
    d. If the proposal is rejected, the relevant Publishing Group must provide a clear reason for rejection, such as: lack of demonstrated need; lack of clearly defined or practical distribution plans; lack of sufficient budget;

[1] While research, early-stage drafting and consultations can be undertaken before the Publishing Group is engaged, the project must still be amenable to substantive changes while it is under review by the Publishing Group.

unrealistic timelines for editing, design and printing; proposes inappropriate or redundant content; failure to secure required approvals; or inconsistency with current United Nations and UNFPA institutional policies, positions, priorities or strategic communications objectives.

i. Development of the publication cannot proceed if the proposal is rejected.
ii. Proposals can be amended and resubmitted for consideration at future Publishing Group review sessions.

3. Publishing Group approval may vary based upon the circumstances and requirements of the publication. Standard variations include:
    a. When the project is an interagency or interorganizational publication led by a party other than UNFPA, the Publishing Group recognizes the need to accommodate the differing requirements and processes of partners. In these cases, the Publishing Group may waive the requirement that an application be submitted before any drafting takes place. Instead, the project lead or principal UNFPA contact person must submit the Publications Proposal Form as soon as there is an indication that a UNFPA logo or posting on a UNFPA website is anticipated.
    b. When the proposed publication is an annual report, part of a series, or other product issued on a routine basis, project leads may request multi-year approval. Approval can be granted for up to three years. Applications in these cases should not refer solely to the contents of the immediately subsequent publication, but should reflect the purpose and production of all future publications covered by the Proposal Form.
    c. When projects are extremely complex, involving ancillary products such as brochures or videos, or involving the production of multiple modules, this must be indicated in the original Publication Proposal Form. In these cases, approval of the proposal applies to the entire suite of products.

4. While the Publishing Group approval is required for the development of publications, ultimate release of the publication is subject to the following conditions:

    a. The project lead must arrange all clearances, peer reviews and other reviews for technical and political accuracy.
    b. The project lead must secure confirmation that a director-level authority has approved the pre-press version of the publication. This will affirm the division director (or in the case of country-office submitted publications, a Country Office Representative) has reviewed the pre-press version to assure the content fully adheres to and reflects UNFPA policies and the ICPD Programme of Action, does not present any substantial risk to UNFPA, and is technically accurate. Written confirmation of this approval must be supplied to the Publishing Group (such as via email).
    c. The project lead must submit proof of professional production services, guaranteeing that the publication was professionally designed and edited by one of the graphic design and editorial services Long Term Agreement (LTA) holders before release (in rare cases where an LTA holder cannot be secured, the project

lead can request an exemption to use an alternative professional-quality service provider). The publication must adhere to the UNFPA editorial and style guide(s) (see Annex III). Proof of Publishing Group approval must be submitted to the Supply Chain Management Unit [SCMU] together with any design or printing procurement requests before SCMU can approve the request.

d. The project lead must submit, via email, the approved, edited and designed pre-press publication to the Publishing Group for final review. The Publishing Group is not responsible for the technical content of the document but will do a spot check related to the editing and compliance with style guidelines.
e. Consistent with the United Nations commitment to protect the environment, print runs should correspond to distribution plans, based on a realistic assessment of the intended audience and the capacity to reach them, and every effort should be made to print on recycled paper and to minimize transportation costs by printing locally when possible. Electronic means of dissemination of publications, reports and materials should be used as much as possible.

B. For content that is written for an academic/scientific publication and/or conference, which does not involve UNFPA logos or posting on a UNFPA website, and that is part of a staff member's job function at UNFPA (i.e., is not an outside activity), director-level approval, steps to ensure careful targeting, and use of appropriate disclaimer language are required, following the description and process below.

1. Prior to development of the manuscript, the project lead (or principal UNFPA contact person working with the project lead) must consult with their director-level supervisor and confirm the work represents an activity that is part of a staff member's UNFPA capacity and does not reflect an outside activity as identified in the UNFPA Policy for Outside Activities. Following consultation, the manuscript can be drafted.
2. During development of the manuscript, the project lead must identify target journals, including back-up journals in case the target journal does not accept the submission. Journal selection and targeting must be based upon the following criteria:
    a. Access: Journal should be either (a) open access, (b) a subscription-journal with a hybrid option (can pay for article to be open access) or (c) a subscription-journal with that allows authors to publicly distribute their accepted manuscript into a shared environment (public websites) within 12 months of the date of publication.
    b. Indexed: Journal is indexed in one of the key directories such as Pubmed, Medline, Science Citation Index, SCOPUS, Directory of Open Access Journals
    c. Peer-reviewed: Peer-review process including response times are in line with industry standards
    d. Scope: Topics in journal's area of focus and previous publications match well with the manuscript's topic

e. Audience: Selection of the journal (e.g., generic, multidisciplinary or specialty) should align with the characteristics and preferences of the primary target audience
f. Editorial board: Journal's editorial board size and experience are in line with expectations for the journal's scope
g. Publication history: Journal history is sufficient to assess fit of manuscript to journal's content with the exception of subsidiary journals
h. Other factors to consider include:
    i. Journal Impact Factor (a measure of the frequency with which articles in the journal are cited)
    ii. Acceptance rate
    iii. Response time
    iv. Ownership of copyright (which varies by journal and may benefit from consultation with the Legal Unit)

3. If funds are required to cover publications fees, the project lead must confirm availability of funds. This may require a fund to be established at the Director level to support planned scientific publications in open access journals.
4. The draft manuscript must include disclaimer language stating that "Any opinions stated within this document reflect those of the authors and not necessarily of the United Nations Population Fund".
5. Upon completion, the project lead must submit the manuscript draft and target journal list to their director for approval. If there is more than one UNFPA co-author on the manuscript, then the lead author (not all authors) should obtain approval so as to streamline the process. Approval must be confirmed in writing by the director. Approval should confirm the work is:
    a. Completely aligned with UNFPA positions and policies
    b. Aligned with United Nations principles and values
    c. That the journal selection meets criteria identified above.
6. If the manuscript is accepted for publication, the project lead should alert the Media and Communications Branch via the email address media@unfpa.org so that media colleagues can consider potential communications associated with the publication.

C. For content including books and theses that do not involve UNFPA logos or posting on a UNFPA website, and that are part of a staff member's work at UNFPA (i.e., are not outside activities), approval is required by a director-level authority and the Media and Communications Branch, following the procedures indicated below. This content excludes opinion or editorial pieces and other media contributions, which are covered by the Public Information and Communications Policy.

1. Before commencing work, the project lead or (principal UNFPA contact person working with the project lead) must consult with their director-level supervisor (at the D-1 or P-6 level) or country representative. The project lead must confirm that the work represents an activity that is part of a staff member's UNFPA capacity

and does not reflect an outside activity as identified in the UNFPA Policy for Outside Activities. Following consultation, the content can be drafted.

2. Once drafted, the project lead must submit the content to their director-level supervisor . If there is more than one UNFPA co-author on the content, then the project lead should obtain approval so as to streamline the process. Approval must be confirmed in writing by the director. Approval should confirm the work is:
   a. Completely aligned with UNFPA positions and policies
   b. Aligned with United Nations principles and values.
3. Prior to publication, but after approval by the director-level authority, the project lead or UNFPA contact person must notify the Media and Communications Branch via the email address media@unfpa.org so that media colleagues can consider potential communications associated with the publication.

4. Upon publication, the author's (or authors') UNFPA affiliation(s) must be visible.

IV. Definitions

Publications: Print or digital information products, including UNFPA's flagship documents, annual reports, brochures, technical reports, promotional materials, conference proceedings and electronic publications, concerning either UNFPA as an organization, or issues in which UNFPA is involved. Publications include content that bears the UNFPA logo, content that is submitted to the UNFPA website for access by a public audience, and content that is submitted to external publishers such as scientific journals or conference publications. Publications *exclude* standard products which are essential to the execution of organizational processes and for which additional approval layers would represent excessive impediment to basic functions and operations. For example, monitoring and evaluation reports, audit reports, and press releases are not considered publications subject to this policy, nor are Executive Board documents, speeches and statements of the Executive Office. Publications also do not include work being developed as part of personal capacity, which is governed by UNFPA's Policy for Outside Activities, or policy documents, which are governed by the Policy for Development, Approval and Issuance of Policies, Procedures, Tools and Guidance Notes.

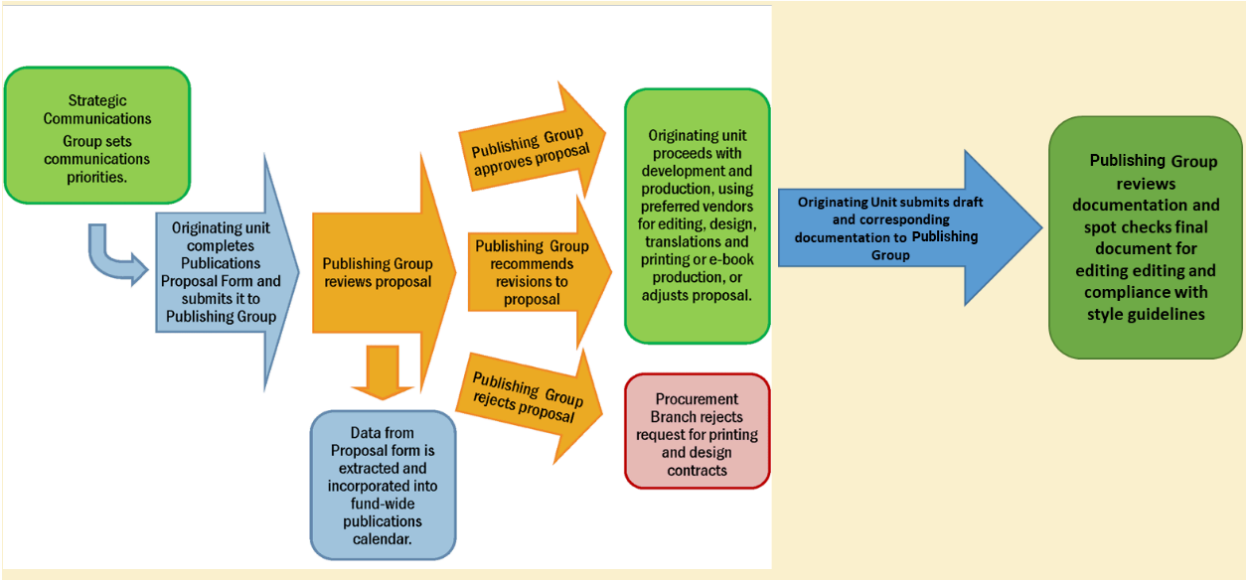
Resource: Resources are smaller communication products that do not require Publishing Group review. The distinction between publications and resources ensures the organization is able to communicate nimbly and with urgency. Examples include situation reports, infographics and fact sheets. To qualify as a resource, the product must be 3,000 words or less, and it must be approved by a branch chief or division director who affirms the content: (1) adheres to the organization's messaging and mandate;(2), is technically accurate; (3) does not pose any reputational risk to the organization; and (4) has been professionally edited and designed to corporate brand and style standards. Project leads must complete a Resource Application Form (see Annex III) certifying these requirements have been met. If requesting that the resource be published on the global UNFPA website, the resource form should be sent, along with the completed resource, to publish@unfpa.org.

Publishing Group: A sub-group of the Strategic Communications Group that reviews proposals for publications at their conceptualization stage. These groups should be interdivisional and/or interdisciplinary.

Journal/scientific publication: Publications of a scientific, academic or medical nature. These publications generally include data, results or analysis, and they are typically subject to standards of scientific scrutiny by a peer-review process, editorial board or other vetting procedure.

Outside activities: Activities that are non-UNFPA/non-United Nations activities.

V. Process Overview Chart and Flowchart



Reference (to step)	Task	Responsible person/unit	Action & Deliverable
1	Complete and submit Publication Proposal Form	Originating unit	Publications Proposal Form, with required authorization, delivered to the Publishing Group for review.
2	Proposal review	Publishing Group	Review and approve, deny or suggest revisions or modifications to publication proposal.
3	Revisions	Originating unit	Revise publication proposal as necessary.

4	2nd review	Publishing Group	Final review and clearance of revised or modified publication proposal
5	Finalization and production of publication	Originating Unit	Finalize draft of publication, contract editors, designers, printers, and e-Pub vendors as necessary. Director-level approver (or country office representative) signs off on any publication submitted to Publishing Groups.
6	Spot check of publication	Publishing Group	Spot check of final publication before approving for distribution

VI. Risk Control Matrix

The draft risk control matrix is available here.

Risk Description	Control Activity	Who performs it	Control Activity	Who performs it
1. UNFPA-logoed publications released without quality control, resulting in reputational risk to the organization.	All publications require director-level approval to ensure content adheres to UNFPA policies and messages. Personnel are also asked to provide proof that professional services (graphic design, editorial services) were secured from an approved professional or LTA holder.	Personnel, directors	Prior to each publications' release, a pre-press version should be shared with the Publishing Group for a spot check. Publishing Group will look for obvious errors (lack of map boundary disclaimers, spelling errors, etc.) before approving for dissemination.	Personnel and Publishing Group members

2. UNFPA-logoed publications are produced without sufficient planning, audience targeting, budgeting and/or dissemination capacity, resulting in low-impact and/or low-circulation publications.	Staff planning on releasing a potential publication must submit an application that states the purpose and scope of the proposed publication, including intended audience and intended reviewers.	Personnel	Upon reviewing the publishing application, the Publishing Group advises on whether approaches should be revised to increase effectiveness in audience targeting and overall use of the final product.	Publishing Group members
3. UNFPA-logoed publications are produced at costs – including production budget and staff hours – greatly exceeding the value provided to the organization.	Each publication application should mention the proposed budget for design, printing, production, editing and translation, as well as the planned release date.	Personnel	Upon reviewing the publishing application, the Publishing Group advises on the budget and timeline to determine appropriateness of both.	Publishing Group members
4. UNFPA authored publications that are published in peer reviewed journals are mis-targeted – appearing in journals that are either not brand-enhancing or not reaching the target audiences	Journals selected for submission must meet specified criteria (i.e., they must be indexed in reputable directories, peer reviewed, served by an experienced editorial board, etc.)	Personnel	Director approval of the publication content and target journal provides a second round of defense controls.	Directors

VII. Annexes

Annex I: Related policies

A. Policy for Information Disclosure
B. Policy on Outside Activities and/or Honors, Decorations, Favors, Gifts, Awards, Remuneration from Outside Parties

C. Public Information and Communication Policy
D. Policy for Development, Approval and Issuance of UNFPA Policies and Procedures

The Policy for Publications reinforces the objectives of the UNFPA Communications Strategy.

Annex II: Terms of Reference for the UNFPA Publishing Group

UNFPA Publishing Groups will facilitate print and electronic publishing for external and internal audiences, bring coherence to UNFPA's publishing initiatives and align them with strategic communication priorities and institutional strategic goals, promote high-quality and original work, and ensure that products reach their intended audiences. The Publishing Groups will help reduce risk to the organization associated with publications while also making publishing more strategic, cost-effective and impactful. They will advise staff on matters of publication production and development and on editing, design and production services. The Publishing Groups can also bring potentially newsworthy projects to the attention of the Media and Communications Branch, which may garner media coverage.

UNFPA Publishing Groups are to be established in Headquarters and in Regional Offices to oversee the implementation of the procedures above. Publishing Groups should be interdivisional, with representatives including one or more communications personnel, one or more technical personnel, and other divisions or specialists included as needed. The Publishing Groups oversee implementation of the Policy and Procedures for Publications, reporting to the Director of the Division of Communications and Strategic Partnerships, in consultation with other Divisions.

The Publishing Group in Headquarters is responsible for content that is intended to have the UNFPA logo where the project lead is a headquarters staff or if the intention is for the publication to be posted on the global UNFPA website. The Publishing Groups in the Regions are responsible for content that is intended to have the UNFPA logo where the project lead is from a regional office or if the intention is for the publication to be posted on the regional UNFPA website but not on the unfpa.org website. The full remit and processes of the Regional Publishing Groups should be localized to reflect the needs and capacities of the region, balancing the need to avoid bottlenecks with the goals set out in this policy (reputational risk mitigation, communication effectiveness and resource preservation). For example, Regional Publishing Groups may review proposals for publications originating from Country Offices to ensure publication plans are aligned with UNFPA priorities and meet UNFPA style and content standards.

Context

This policy represents an update to the Publications Policy that entered into force on 6 December 2013. It formalizes practices that have developed over time, addressed gaps in the previous policy, and provides guidance for both Headquarters and Regional offices.

Scope

The establishment of Publishing Group(s) is mandated by the UNFPA Communications Strategy, endorsed by the Executive Committee and officially launched in 2012.

Publishing Groups are among several technical committees that receive direction from and report to the Strategic Communications Group, which provides a governance framework for global communications at UNFPA. The Strategic Communications Group is chaired by the Executive Director.

The Publishing Group(s) will help establish coherence in print *and* digital communications and ensure that all divisions and branches speak with one voice, communicate messages that reinforce UNFPA's vision, strategies and policies, and be engaged at the conceptualization stage to ensure the best medium for reaching target audiences are chosen to enhance the production process and the quality of publications.

The Publishing Group(s) will promote quality publishing that is strategic, targeted and timely. They will discourage the production of print or digital materials that fail to offer new or relevant content, are poorly conceived or written, have no clear targeted audience or dissemination plan, or lack technical and academic rigor.

Guiding principles

The Publishing Group(s) will base decisions on principles of:
- Relevance
- Quality
- Impact
- Cost-effectiveness.

To assess a publication's relevance, the Publishing Group(s) will ask how it is relevant to current institutional and strategic communications goals.

To promote quality, the Publishing Group(s) will consider whether the proposal includes specific plans and funding for professional editing, layout and design by an approved professional or Long Term Agreement (LTA) holder as well as plans to ensure that the publication is well-written, technically accurate and academically sound.

Regarding impact, the Publishing Group(s) will require individuals or offices that initiate publishing projects to document the intended impact and, over time, measure the actual impact following dissemination, aligned with the relevant division's result indicators in the Strategic Plan and results framework.

Regarding cost-effectiveness, the Publishing Group(s) will encourage cost-effectiveness in publications decisions by requiring individuals or offices to make digital publications their default and to justify printing hard copies.

Composition and working modality

The Publishing Group will be chaired by a member of the Publishing Group.

At the Headquarters level, each division will nominate two members (one primary and one back-up) as group representatives. This group will report to – and receive guidance from – the Director of the Division of Communication and Strategic Partnerships.

At the Regional level, the groups will be chaired by the relevant Regional Communication Adviser. These groups are similarly advised to nominate representatives from across divisions or disciplines within the respective regional offices. These groups will report to – and receive guidance from – their relevant Regional Director.

Frequency

The Headquarters Publishing Group will meet the first Thursday of each month to review applications. However, as a standard, the frequency of meetings will be informed by the volume of proposals. Members who are unable to attend the regularly scheduled meetings will be required to delegate their responsibilities to ensure each division is represented at each meeting.

Regional Publishing Groups will adopt similar approaches to ensuring that risk is managed throughout the organization as well as ensuring that all UNFPA publications are relevant, of high quality, impactful and published in a cost-effective manner. Periodic meetings of publishing group representatives will be held to exchange challenges, good practices and recommendations.

Annex III: Templates and Forms

Publication Proposal Form
Resource Application Form
Regional Publishing Group submissions should be sent to the relevant Regional Communications Adviser
UNFPA Editorial Style Guide
UNFPA Brand Guide