Section 8: How will you engage with your community?

- What guidelines and policies will you use to guide your activities?

- How will you monitor audience needs and emerging trends?

- How will you engage with your audience on social media?

- How will you tailor and deliver content to specific audiences?

- How will you track community engagement?

- How will you use data to continually refine your approach?

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Section 8-
Community engagement plan - How will you engage with your community?

8

How Will You
Engage With Your
Community?

8^A

What Guidelines
And Policies Will You Use
To Guide Your Activities?

8^B

How Will You Monitor
Audience Needs And
Emerging Trends?

8^C

How Will You Engage
With Your Audience
On Social Media?

8^D

How Will You Tailor
And Deliver Content
To Specific Audiences?

8^E

How Will You Track
Community Engagement?

8^F

How Will You Use
Data To Continually
Refine Your Approach?

W8
Community
Engagement

9

How Will You
Know If You're
Successful?

8ᴬ What guidelines and policies will you use to guide your activities?

Importance ★ ★   **Time** ★ ★   **Cost** ★

Summary
Create a set of policies that will guide your social media activity and interactions so that everyone involved in posting knows up front how to interact appropriately with the community.

Why is it important?
Community engagement is a critical component for building your program's social media audience around the topics of disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction so that in an emergency situation they will know where to turn. This approach *builds trust, empowers people, and builds community resilience, thereby supporting positive behaviour change.* Engaging the community involves interacting with them in a two-way conversation, in which listening and responding are two sides of the same coin.

The development of a social media protocol lays out the policies you'll follow for all of your program's social networking accounts. This is a document that specifies guidelines for:

- Who has authority to post on behalf of the organization

- Chain of command and approval process, when needed, for posts and issues that arise

- Which channels will be used for each audience and types of information

- Your organization's style guide for "voice," look and feel of posts, and profile information

- Development process for each type of content

- How to deal with comments and criticisms online

- What types of accounts to follow (and not follow)

- Disclosure, transparency and other legal issues

- Guidance for staff posting about the program from their own accounts

- Account password protocol

Key Considerations:

1

While several people may be involved in maintaining the account, a designated social media manager or online community manager should be designated as the lead.

2

The more details you are able to include in the social media protocol, especially for how to engage the community before, during and after a potential disaster event, the more quickly your posts can be ready to go when needed. Preplanning messages and content for the most likely scenarios will be helpful.

3

Creating a protocol for when and how it's appropriate to engage with people who post negative messages about your program online will keep you from wasting your time responding to "trolls" who are not part of your priority audience.

4

For all social media platforms that offer the option, get your account verified (e.g., the blue check on Twitter and Facebook). This will help your potential followers know that your account is the correct one to follow for accurate information.

Action steps:

1

Create a social media protocol document and keep it updated as needed, to include helpful information for whoever may be involved in running the accounts. Be sure that organizational leadership signs off on the plan.

For more information:

- Your Guide to Creating a Social Media Policy

- Re-Thinking the Social Media Policy

- How to Guide Your Employees to Post More on Social Media

- Need Social Media Policy Examples? Here Are 7 Terrific Social Policies To Inspire Yours

- Social Media Manager Vs. Community Manager: What's The Difference?

- CERC: Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication. Community Engagement

Example:

The IFRC Social Media Policy provides guidelines to staff on using official social media accounts, as well as posting from their own personal accounts. The policy includes guidance for community managers of the IFRC's social media accounts on the rules for what to post and how to interact online. It also lays out which departments and individuals are responsible for various activities.

8ᴮ How will you monitor audience needs and emerging trends?

Importance ★ ★   **Time** ★ ★   **Cost** ★ ★

Summary

Create a social listening program to monitor the needs and concerns of your priority audiences, as well as to identify emerging news and trends.

Why is it important?

Social listening is an integral part of the social media content development and audience engagement process. *Being aware of what members of your priority audiences are talking about*—whether related to your organization, disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction, your key behaviours, or other issues of the day—serves as a valuable research tool to help guide content development.

You can use the search and analytics tools that are built into each platform or subscribe to online social media analysis tools that scan multiple platforms at once and provide more detail about who's saying what.

- Choose keywords that reflect the topics you want to track, using the language your priority audiences would use to talk about them.

- Include the name of your organization, your location, likely disaster types, and words related to your key behaviours and levers of change.

- Track relevant hashtags, including those you create for your own campaigns, existing hashtags, and those that arise organically out of disaster events.

- Follow people strategically on your accounts to ensure that your social media streams include members of your priority audiences, the news and entertainment accounts they tend to follow, and their social influencers.

- Keep tabs on trending topics and be sure to also watch out for rumors or misinformation that are getting passed around so you can address them immediately.

Key Considerations:

1

If you serve a specific geographic area, you may be able to limit the results of your social listening to your region. Geo-mapping posts when users include location information can be helpful to spot local trends and disaster-related needs.

2

Social listening can help you identify the people and organizations who tend to talk about topics related to disaster preparedness or your other issues of interest. Consider reaching out to these people and organizations to build relationships that can be helpful to increase the reach of your content.

Action steps:

1

Decide on the tool(s) you will use for your social listening activities and set them up.

2

Choose appropriate keywords to monitor (you can add and subtract keywords as needed over time).

3

Follow relevant accounts, or create Twitter lists, to help stay on top of emerging news and trends.

4

Create a routine for how often you will review the results of the social listening and respond as needed.

For more information:

- Using Social Media Monitoring to Enhance Your NGO Impact

- The Complete Guide to Social Media Listening for Nonprofits

- The Ultimate Guide to Social Listening

- Social Media Analysis Tools for Preparedness

- Rumour Has It: a Practice Guide to Working with Rumours

Example:

🔍 **Bahamas hurricane**   🔄 −

🌀 **weathertrackernightfury** @weathertracker3   10:19 AM – 6 May 2020 via Twitter Web App ↻
0 ⭐ 1
@gardenerforever @NHC_Atlantic @tornadotrackers Dorian's worst and most well known damages (in the northern Bahamas) were inflicted when it was a Category 5 hurricane (and during its weakening phase as it was stalling over the islands).

Maritza Villegas @mahvillegas   4:12 AM – 6 May 2020 via Twitter for Android   ↻ 263 ⭐ 398
RT @NWSNHC: The Tropical Cyclone Report of 2019's #Dorian has been released. It was the strongest hurricane to hit the northwestern Bahamas…

Brian @Brian_Cald   3:32 AM – 6 May 2020 via Twitter for Android   ↻ 6 ⭐ 9
RT @NHC_TAFB: Interested in hearing about the impacts in the Bahamas due to Hurricane Dorian? Check out the webinar hosted by John Cangiolo…

🌐 **Kevin Leecaster (🗲)** @kb_leecaster   3:25 AM – 6 May 2020 via Twitter for Android   ↻ 4 ⭐ 6
RT @MooreCharitable: As part of a $1MM pledge by conservation philanthropist Louis Bacon, Moore Bahamas has announced new partnerships with…

Daniel Brown @DBrownie23   2:22 AM – 6 May 2020 via Twitter for iPhone   ↻ 2 ⭐ 4
RT @NWSKeyWest: Tomorrow's @NOAA Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team's

🔍 **Hurricane preparedne…** ❓   🔄 −

amdiabetesassn @AmDiabetesAssn   1:36 AM – 8 May 2020 via TweetDeck   ↻ 1 ⭐ 2
It's Hurricane Preparedness Week! Are you ready? Having enough supplies to make it through a hurricane isn't enough. Here's what you need to know! For more, please visit diabetesdisasterresponse.org #HurricanePreparednessWeek https://t.co/hzZDLRdcKm

Flip The Script@8#2020#⚓🙏🌀⚓🇺🇸✨🦬🌐🗲😃💜⬜😲⬛ @FlipTheScript8   1:19 AM – 8 May 2020 via Twitter for Android   ↻ 13 ⭐ 24
RT @AMHQ: It's Hurricane Preparedness Week! Home improvement expert @DannyLipford has some great tips to get you started! https://t.co/MfT5…

Marifer Moncada @MariferMC2   1:16 AM – 8 May 2020 via Twitter for Android   ↻ 49 ⭐ 65
RT @NHC_Atlantic: Today's Hurricane Preparedness topic is on Strengthening Your Home. Here are some things you can do now and before a sto…

Jan Sassaman @JanSassaman   1:16 AM – 8 May 2020 via Twitter for iPhone   ↻ 2 ⭐ 2
RT @HersheyFire: Here's three things you can do today as we move through #HurricanePreparednessWeek The time spent today will help you and…

Darren Lenick @dflenick   1:11 AM – 8 May 2020 via Twitter for iPhone   ↻ 1 ⭐ 2
RT @TownofDavie: Take some time out of the week to help you strengthen your home with a cleanup checklist! Prepare against tropical storm…

8ᶜ How will you engage with your audience on social media?

Importance ★ ★   **Time** ★ ★   **Cost** ★

Summary
Create an engagement strategy for how you will interact with people via your social media accounts. Having a plan set in advance facilitates posting and replying in a timely and consistent way.

Why is it important?
Being responsive on social media boosts your organization's credibility and reputation. Answer questions. Respond to concerns. Let your priority audiences know you understand them and care about their needs. This is how you build a relationship and become a trusted source of information and disaster-related guidance.

The general guidelines for engagement cut across all the social networks.

- Create relevant and valuable content.

- Use social media as a two-way medium for dialogue, not just broadcasting information.

- Communicate like a real person – it's okay to be more informal. Respond to comments in a timely way.

- Be accountable by sharing facts only from credible sources, andsources and correcting your mistakes publicly and quickly.

Create a variety of content that will appeal to the different types of social media users in your audience:

- **Lurkers** – Interested in your posts but don't want to interact at all => Continue creating good content

- **Novices** – Active observers in your online community, who create a limited amount of content, and may participate occasionally in conversations => Make it easy for them to join in by posting questions and specific challenges

- **Insiders** – Consistently engage in dialogue and content creation, and interact with other community members => Encourage them to actively create and share their own content related to your posts and topics

- **Leaders** – Influencers who provide a source of expert guidance, who offer commentary on other posts and correct misinformation => Work with them as partners, providing them with quality content to share with their followers and amplifying their relevant posts

Key Considerations:

1

Your intent should be not just posting content, but also building an online community. Think in terms of communal tactics like hosting Twitter chats, initiating unique community hashtags, sharing content created by your community members, and celebrating their successes.

2

Look for opportunities to participate in relevant initiatives and conversations across the social media landscape as a way of reaching members of your priority audiences and bringing them into your online community.

3

Building your follower base is generally a slow yet steady process. Don't buy "fake followers" to increase your count and remember that quality is more important than quantity – better to have 100 real members of your priority audiences than 1000 random people who don't care about your content.

Action steps:

1

Decide what level of participation your organization will engage in on each of its social network accounts. Will you take a staged approach, focusing on social listening first, or jump into posting and responding immediately?

2

As you create content, keep in mind the different types of social media users and how you can engage each.

3

Create a plan for how you will respond to different types of comments on your posts and from other accounts, including how to deal with negative feedback and internet trolls

For more information:

- How to Use Social Media to Better Engage People Affected by Crises: A Brief Guide for Those Using Social Media in Humanitarian Organizations

- American Red Cross Social Engagement Handbook

- CERC: Social Media and Mobile Media Devices – Social Media Users, Working with Social Media Before and During a Crisis

- The Art of Listening: Social Media Toolkit for Nonprofits

- Want A Successful Community? Don't Be A Social Media Manager

- The Ultimate Guide to Community Management

- 26 Tips for Managing a Social Media Community

Example:

Responding to Social Media Comments
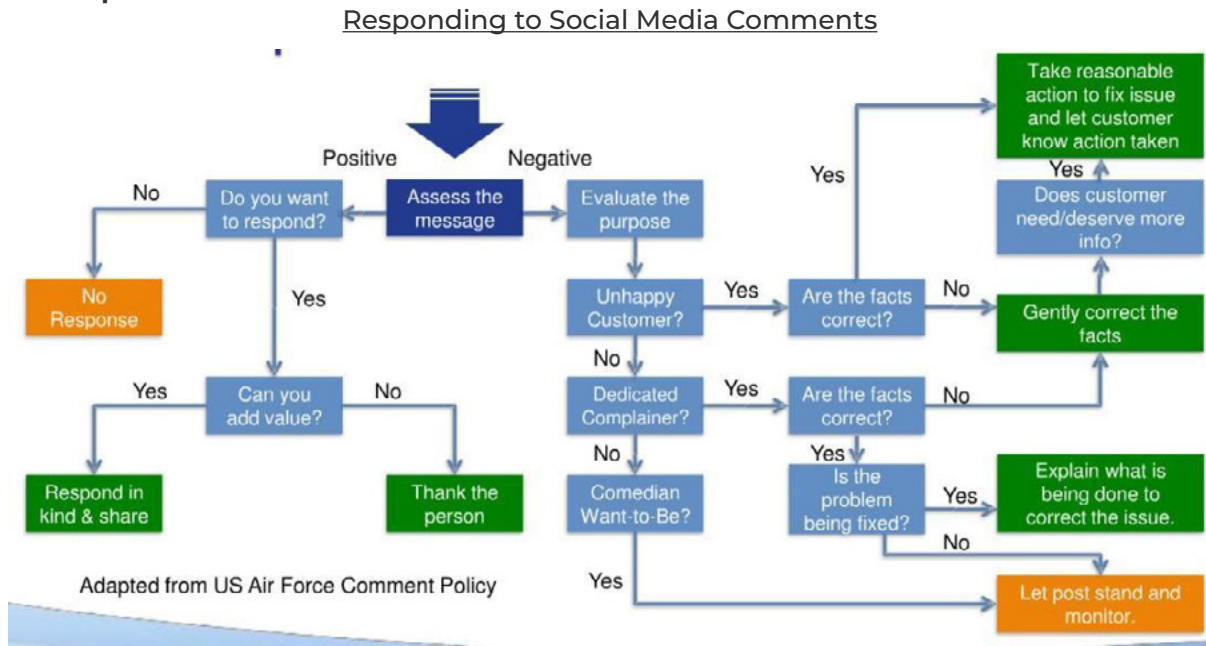
From American Red Cross Social Engagement Handbook 2.0 - Adaptation of the US Air Force flowchart for how to respond to comments

8ᴰ How will you tailor and deliver content to specific audiences?

Importance ★ ★   **Time** ★   **Cost** ★ ★

Summary
Use methods that tailor and target your social media outreach to each of your specific priority audiences to maximize behaviour change effectiveness.

Why is it important?
People respond more to communications that feel like they are speaking directly to them. If you have more than one priority audience or want to get more precise in reaching out to a segment who holds a certain attitude or behavioural characteristic, you can use various methods to direct specific posts or messages to them. You may already use different social media platforms to reach distinct priority audiences. Use some of the following approaches to connect with those subgroups even more effectively.

Advertising options on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others, let you get very specific regarding who will see your promotion.

Find where people in your audiences spend their online time by searching for relevant groups and forums, such as on Facebook, LinkedIn or Reddit. Perhaps your community has a local Facebook group for parents or a LinkedIn group for school administrators.

- Avoid being self-promotional but be helpful in answering questions and providing resources.

- Use hashtags, Twitter chats often have a hashtag that the community uses for conversations and sharing resources, even in between scheduled events.

- Make your messages more credible and findable by working with the social media content creators whom your priority audiences follow.

Effective influencers are not always celebrities but may be the people in a particular niche whose opinions others value. Reach out to them, whether by formally inviting them to work with you, or tagging them informally with content they may be interested in sharing.

Key Considerations:

1

Determine the content that will be most successful as a paid ad by tracking the engagement on your organic posts to identify which have resonated most with your followers (see Section 8E). Boost those posts as promoted posts to reach others in your priority groups who have not yet seen them.

2

Work with your partners to cross-promote posts that will be of interest to followers of both organizations' accounts. Consider inviting relevant partners and influencers to write guest posts on your blog or offer to make your content available for their social media, when it's beneficial to both groups.

3

Some of the social media sites, such as Facebook, let you upload an email list or use those who have liked your page to create a "lookalike" audience for your ad campaign. These are other people on the site similar to those who have shown interest in your content.

Action steps:

1

Determine the priority audience or subgroup for whom you want to tailor and target content.

2

Consider using promoted posts or social media ads to deliver the content specifically to that audience.

3

Search for relevant groups, forums and hashtags that would be of interest to your priority audiences and join them. Respond to questions that arise and share helpful resources.

4

Identify influencers and create a strategy for working with them to reach your priority audience.

5

Create a strategy for involving your priority audience members, partners and stakeholders in content creation.

For more information:

- How to Find Your Target Audience on Social Media: 10 Tips to Follow

- How to Find Popular Twitter Hashtags

- The Ultimate Guide to Instagram Hashtags

- The Ultimate Guide to Mastering the Basics of Effective Social Media Advertising

- Social Media Advertising & Paid Social Guide

- The Evergreen Guide to Launching a Facebook Advertising Strategy

- 7 Examples of Successful Reddit Marketing

- Influencer Marketing Guide: How to Work With Social Media Influencers

Example:
Case Study

Know Your City.TV (KYC.TV) is a project of the NGO Slum Dwellers International, which is a network of community-based organizations of the urban poor in 32 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. KYC.TV brings together an international collective of youth living in slums, learning by doing, and making media for social impact. Youth are trained via local workshops to create videos with their phone cameras, using social media to tell the stories of their communities. Through social networks like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, they reach their peers and others to work toward change around issues including in-situ upgrading for informal settlements, anti-forced eviction, participatory development, co-creation of habitat, youth development and inclusion.

8ᴱ How will you track community engagement?

Importance ★ ★   Time ★ ★   Cost ★

Summary
Set up systems to monitor the community's engagement with your social media activity so you can respond and adjust your approach based on that information.

Why is it important?
In addition to social listening activities *that help you understand what people are generally talking about online,* you also need to track how they are engaging specifically with your content so you can *respond in real time and use the feedback to improve.*

Set up a dashboard to track the key engagement metrics that will help you identify the approaches that resonate most with your priority audiences. You can easily create a dashboard manually with a spreadsheet, or there are numerous social media analytics apps that will automatically collect and track the metrics for you. *Many of the social networks have a built-in analytics engine that can provide you with information on how individual posts perform and give you a snapshot of the overall characteristics of your followers.*

For each post, you'll want to track descriptive information like:

- Social network

- **Timing** (day of week/time of day)

- Topic/message

- Behavioural driver of change addressed

- **Type of media** (e.g., text, graphics, video)

- **Type of content** (e.g., educational, story-based, how-to, meme, etc.)

Then, to determine which of these approaches are most effective over time, track the different types of posts on engagement metrics such as:

- Likes

- Shares/retweets

- Link clicks

- Comments/replies

- Direct messages

- **Engagement rate** (any interaction with the post divided by the total number of people who saw it)

Key Considerations:

1

Twitter's Analytics, Facebook's Page Insights, Instagram's business account Insights and the other social networks track certain metrics on your accounts for you. You can also install Google Analytics on your website to track which social networks and posts send the most visitors to various pages on your site.

2

The specific metrics to be tracked may be different for various platforms. For example, using YouTube Analytics, you can monitor things like views, watch time, audience retention (percentage of video watched), where people are finding your videos, number of subscribers, and more. On Pinterest, the analytics include numbers of link clicks, impressions, "closeups" (how many users looked more closely at the pin content), saves, and overall engagement.

Action steps:

1

Identify the engagement metrics you want to track for each of your social network accounts.

2

Create a social media dashboard, either manually or via an online monitoring service.

3

Include your social listening results in the dashboard, monitoring who is talking about your organization or issue on social media, whether or not it's related to one of your posts.

4

Track each of your posts and their performance on the engagement metrics, in real time as well as on a weekly or monthly basis for the big picture perspective.

For more information:

- 22 Tips for Building Meaningful Social Media Dashboards from All Networks

- Social Media Analytics: A Practical Guidebook for Journalists and Other Media Professionals

- 10 Metrics to Track When Analyzing Your Social Media Marketing

- How to Create a Social Media Report (Includes a Free Template)

Example:

Page Summary Last 7 days ▾

Export Data ⬇

Results from **Dec 9, 2020 - Dec 15, 2020**
Note: Does not include today's data. Insights activity is reported in the Pacific time zone. Ads activity is reported in the time zone of your ad account.

■ Organic ■ Paid

Actions on Page
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

7
Total Actions on Page
▾22%

December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

19
Page Likes ▴0%

Recommendations
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

We have insufficient data to show for the selected time period.

Page Followers
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

19
Page Followers ▴0%

Page Views
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

122
Total Page Views ▾12%

Post Reach
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

1,086
People Reached ▾52%

Post Engagement
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

90
Post Engagement ▾62%

Page Previews
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

We have insufficient data to show for the selected time period.

Story Reach
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

331
People Reached ▴620%

Videos
December 9 - December 15 ⓘ

56
3-Second Video Views
▾48%

8F How will you use data to continually refine your approach?

Importance ★ ★   **Time** ★ ★   **Cost** ★

Summary

Use the monitoring data you collect to help refine and continually improve your social media content in real time and for the future.

Why is it important?

While you may have specific overall program objectives that you'll be evaluating over a longer time period, tracking short-term response to your social media posts and making real-time adjustments will help you reach those bigger objectives. After all, *if your audience doesn't see your posts or pay attention by engaging with them, you won't have the opportunity to influence their behaviour.*

As you track the engagement metrics showing how your audience is responding (or not), you will likely see trends emerging regarding what's working and what needs to be changed. In the long term, you can use this information to cut back on the types of posts that are not gaining much engagement, and to focus more on the successful approaches.

In the short term, and in fact as soon as you post and people start responding, you can immediately use what you're seeing to make changes. For example, sometimes messages are misinterpreted as they spread, or raise specific questions; by keeping an eye on the replies to your posts, you can immediately follow up with clarifications or additional information.

Key Considerations:

1

Real-time adjustments to your social media strategy should be based not just on a single negative response to one of your posts, but on the overall trends you see from your audience. Be agile in terms of shifting messaging when necessary in real time, but also look at the bigger picture before overhauling the entire strategy.

2

To test different elements of your paid or organic posts, you can conduct what's called "A/B testing." This is a way of learning which messages, visuals or calls to action yield the best engagement, by changing only one element at a time and tracking the results.

3

The best days of the week and times of day to post depends on your specific priority audience. You may find, for example, that professional audiences are more responsive during morning and afternoon commute hours, while mothers with young children are more likely to wait until the kids are asleep at night to go online. Try posting at different times and track when your posts get the most engagement.

Action steps:

1

Don't wait to look at your analytics until the end of each month. Monitor them at least daily to be able to make mid-course corrections while your responses will still be relevant.

2

Return to the message development, content creation, and community engagement steps as needed to apply what you learn about the elements that contribute most to success.

For more information:

- How to Successfully Refine Social Media Campaigns

- Test, Measure, Reflect and Refine

- A/B Testing on Social Media: How to Do it with Tools You Already Have

- A Simple 6-Step Framework for Running Social Media Experiments (with 87 Ideas Included)

Social Media Troubleshooting Chart	
Metrics Show:	**Try This:**
Low number of impressions (people seeing your posts)	• Change times of day or days of week you post • Change posting frequency • Consider paid ads to boost views
Low overall engagement	• Do research to better understand audience needs • Reconsider your content strategy • Try different formats for posts • Be sure posts are relevant and interesting • Reduce the number of "salesy" or repetitive posts
Wrong demographics	• Figure out where your audience is online • Use paid ads to target specific audiences • Work with influencers or organizational partners • Use relevant hashtags
Viewing content but not engaging further	• Use a call to action in posts • Be more interactive: ask questions, use polls, reply to comments • Encourage and share content created by members of your audience
Not clicking through to links or not watching full video	• Improve headlines and descriptions • Pique curiosity, provide incentives • Cut out the filler, keep it short
Low number of followers	• Post interesting, relevant content • Provide social proof by working with influencers and trusted organizations to share your social media content • Boost profile with paid ads
Negative comments and replies	• Reconsider messaging approach • Analyze whether posters are priority audience members or trolls • Address valid criticisms with social media content or organizational issues
Content effective on one platform but not on others	• Reconsider choice of social networks • Customize content better for each platform

1.

Do you have a social media protocol that includes the following information?

- Who has authority to post on behalf of the organization
- Chain of command and approval process, when needed, for posts and issues that arise
- Which channels will be used for each audience and types of information
- Your organization's style guide for "voice," look and feel of posts, and profile information
- Development process for each type of content
- How to deal with comments and criticisms online
- What types of accounts to follow (and not follow)
- Disclosure, transparency and other legal issues
- Guidance for staff posting about the program from their own accounts
- Who maintains updated password information for all accounts
- Other:
  _____
  _____

2.

Social listening keywords to track

a.) Your organization/campaign:
_____
_____

b.) Your location:

_____
_____

c.) Topics:
_____
_____

d.) Behaviours:
_____
_____

e.) Hashtags:
_____
_____

3.

What level(s) of social media participation will you engage in? (answer for each platform)

a.) Platform:
Social listening and learning
Responding to other users
Curating and sharing content created by others
Creating your own original content

b.) Platform:
Social listening and learning
Responding to other users
Curating and sharing content created by others
Creating your own original content

c.) Platform:
Social listening and learning
Responding to other users
Curating and sharing content created by others
Creating your own original content

a.) Lurkers:
_____
_____

b.) Novices:
_____
_____

c.) Insiders:
_____
_____

d.) Leaders:
_____
_____

4.

How will you engage the different types of social media users?

5.

What methods will you use to reach each of your priority audiences?

○ Paid ads or promoted posts
_____

○ Groups and forums:
_____

○ Hashtags:
_____

○ Twitter chats:
_____

○ Influencer outreach:
_____

○ Working with audience members:
_____

○ Working with partners or stakeholders:
_____

○ Other:
_____
_____

6.

Which social media metrics will you track?

○ Likes

○ Shares/retweets

○ Link clicks

○ Comments/replies

○ Direct messages

○ Video views/watch time

○ Impressions (how many saw the post)

○ Overall engagement rate

○ Follower/subscriber count

○ Audience characteristics

○ Referrals to website

○ Mentions of your organization or issue

○ Other:
_____
_____