FIELD AID 1
PROMOTING VACCINATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA
About this Guide

This field guide is intended to help communication professionals to best use social media in their vaccination in the second year of life and measles and rubella vaccination promotion efforts. It is broken down by national, subnational and district, and health worker levels.

An Overview of Social Media and Vaccination

Because social media is used by many of the caregivers that vaccination in the second year of life and measles and rubella vaccination promotion efforts are trying to reach, it is a powerful communication tool (especially when used to address hesitancy around vaccination). From engaging religious leaders to improving community confidence in vaccination and increasing awareness around and knowledge of vaccination services, social media can be used to strategically address vaccination hesitancy. One reason is that social media is often used by caregivers to discuss content related to the vaccinations, as well as defend their positive or negative views of vaccination in general. Therefore, using social media to constantly disseminate reliable material has been shown to create a strong image of vaccination which leads to increased vaccination coverage.

In countries and communities where social media is used, social media can provide:

- Real-time monitoring of attitudes and perceptions about vaccination
- The promotion of positive vaccination behaviours
- A channel for raising awareness of important vaccination events and milestones
- A direct line of communication for managing a vaccination crisis
- An avenue for interacting with target audiences and responding to vaccination-related concerns
The ultimate goal is to promote vaccination in the second year of life and measles and rubella vaccination and establish it as an accepted, normal behaviour (a social norm). Part of this effort includes using social media and customizing communications based on the specific needs and settings of sub-national and district-level communities. However, social media communication doesn’t stand alone. In countries and communities where social media is used, social media communication should be integrated into your existing communication plan and customized to your specific needs and setting. However, while social media is often an important and powerful tool, it isn’t as useful in every context. In instances where social media use is low, it may be best to focus your work on other communication efforts. It is essential that the communication channels you use are tailored to your audience, how well they can access the channels, and which ones they prefer to use.

**A note on health workers**

While health workers might not be formally involved in a communication strategy, they have a unique and important role to play because of their ability to directly communicate with caregivers both online and offline. This guide provides tips on how communication professionals can help health workers to constructively address vaccination in the second year of life and measles and rubella vaccination questions, concerns and misconceptions.
NATIONAL LEVEL

In addition to developing your own national-level social media strategies, a major part of vaccination in the second year of life and measles and rubella vaccination communication on social media is disseminating the information discovered at the national level to sub-national levels in order to inform their social media strategies. Before you engage in these activities, it is important to first analyse the capacity of the people responsible for social media work and define any unclear chains of command and communication coordination that need to be addressed before beginning.

Once you’re ready to start, the six key activities at the national level in this effort are:

- **Auditing the social media landscape to discover attitudes and beliefs about vaccines.**
- **Using landscape findings to create an informed social media strategy.**
- **Integrating the findings into existing communications and adapting them for social media.**
- **Supplying sub-national communicators with best practices and key messages.**
- **Identifying social media influencers are and engaging them in vaccination communication efforts.**
- **Crafting an ongoing social media plan.**
Auditing the social media landscape to discover attitudes and beliefs about vaccines.

Surveying the target population’s social media landscape can help health professionals to understand who is using social media, what social media platforms are being used, and how each platform is being used. An audit can also be used to uncover who influencers are and whether specific forums about vaccines in general (or about vaccination in the second year of life and measles and rubella vaccines specifically) exist, who uses them, and what conversations are happening there. Understanding the social media landscape will reveal how certain segments of people are divided by location or interest group on social media, allowing communication connected to their interests (i.e., sharing news about the delivery of a vaccination to a particular city). When conducting your social media audit, make sure to confirm that the audience(s) you are trying to reach are both on social media and actively utilizing it. If they are not, disregard this guide—social media is only useful if it can reach your intended audience(s).

The key activity in social media analysis is mapping out all the social media channels that target populations engage with, what each channel is primarily used for, and who uses them. While it is important to recognize that social media channels vary by location, common social media channels to consider in your landscape analysis include:

- **facebook**: A social networking platform that allows users to connect with other users, and upload photos and videos.
- **YouTube**: A website that allows for video sharing.
- **WhatsApp**: A messaging application for smartphones that uses the internet to send text, video, or audio messages and images.
- **WeChat**: A Chinese messaging and social media application.
- **Weibo**: A website and application.
- **Baidu**: A Chinese communication platform provided by a search engine.
- **Linkedin**: A professional networking website that is focused on employment.
- **Reddit**: A website centred on discussion threads.
- **LINE**: A Japanese messaging application.
- **Pinterest**: An application that is designed to help users discover web content.
- **Telegram**: A messaging application.
- **Kontakte**: A Russian social media and social networking service.
- **KakaoTalk**: A South Korean instant messaging application.

Keep in mind that the way each of these channels is used and the specific kind of content they contain will vary by location as well.

Another method for auditing a social media landscape is reviewing groups across social media networks that are specifically related to parents such as mother’s groups. This will help you understand the current views of vaccination that are dominant on social media as well as help communicators understand where these conversations happen.
Using landscape findings to create an informed social media strategy.

The context-specific information revealed by a social media survey can be a powerful addition to your existing vaccination in the second year of life and measles and rubella vaccination communication strategy. The overarching goal is to increase the presence of credible facts and information about vaccination in the second year of life and measles and rubella vaccination on social media networks.

Once you have all of the information, it can help you to decide:

- **The objective of your social media communication.**
  Does your campaign need to focus on addressing myths associated with the vaccines? Does it need to reinforce correct information? Would it be most useful to directly address caregiver questions and concerns? Your new landscape data will tell you what the goal of your communication should be.

- **The activities needed to meet your objective.**
  Once you know the goal of your social media communication, next decide what you will do on social media to achieve it. If your campaign needs to address myths, you might focus on debunking them. If your campaign needs to reinforce correct information, you might use social media influencers to expand your messaging.

- **Which social media platforms to use.**
  Based on the specific audience you’re trying to reach, use your landscape data to determine which platforms specific audiences use most and for which activities. Pair your social media strategies and campaigns with the audience-specific channels that best suit them.

- **What messages perform best on which platform.**
  Each social media platform is used differently. Social networking platforms like Facebook and Instagram are used differently than WhatsApp and WeChat, which are primarily messaging platforms. Use the information gleaned from your social media landscape audit to understand which types of messages perform best on certain platforms. Tailor your message in a way that is aligned with the best performing messages on the platform you are using. For example, notifying community members about a new vaccination delivery might be most effective when shared through the social media page of a city administration or a local media website. Communicators can also join local groups based on geographic location to connect with audiences about events in their area.

- **How social media will be used in a crisis.**
  When reactions to vaccines or other crises occur, have a concrete plan for responding to them on social media based on how caregivers have used platforms to deal with issues in the past. In the event of a sensational news story related to vaccination in the second year, of life or measles and rubella vaccinations or a dramatic event related to vaccination such as an AEFI, provide a timely response from a respected government group or official to address public concerns through the social media platforms outlined in your social media engagement plan.

Once you have a social media strategy, use it to:

- **Meet the demands of specific audiences.**
  Social media allows you to share
information that is highly audience specific and therefore highly relevant.

- **Plan social media communication before important events.**
  Before important dates or mass vaccination deliveries, planned communication should be used to address the possibility of a high volume of concerns and questions from caregivers and the community in advance. Centre your messages on honest communication that uses simple language about possible side effects and how often they occur.

- **Participate in the social media spaces of professionals.**
  Participating in the online spaces where professionals share news and articles related to their field is a convenient way to reach relevant experts with reliable and correct information related to vaccination. It is best to share this information through the personal account of a relevant professional in order to gain the community’s confidence. This person should be selected from a current group’s members or be a trusted professional who is invited to join the group.

- **Be proactive.**
  Send positive messaging, encourage participation in vaccination, and promote trust in health services. Be sure to coordinate with the service delivery side to ensure that quality services are being provided and that the services are both both performing reliably and being viewed as trustworthy sources of information.

- **Create a communication platform for experts with social media profiles.**
  Gather a group of experts and health workers who already have active social media profiles and coordinate their efforts. This process should be maintained by a social media specialist if possible and samples of conversations related to vaccination should be collected so that communicators can understand where conversations most often occur and what these conversations are about.

- **Monitor the activity and influence of anti-vaccination advocates.**
  While these groups are often small, they tend to have very determined beliefs about vaccination and use constant social media monitoring in order to engage in vaccination-related discussions outside of social media spaces. It is important to provide an opposition to their arguments through similar tactics that include messages with links to reliable sources that can be seen and used by others.

  **Note:** Never directly engage with or reference anti-vaccination advocates in your social media communication. Instead, tailor your social media communication to the topics that anti-vaccination groups advocate and work to establish social norms around those topics. Do this by sharing relevant facts and information about the topics being discussed.

Integrating the findings into existing communications and adapt them for social media.

Once you have determined how to effectively use social media to reach your audience, review your current communication materials and decide which parts can be adapted to perform well on social media. Make sure that communication is consistent both online and offline and respond to real-time concerns with on-message communications. Because social media communication is one part of a broader communications strategy, use the Integrating Social Media worksheet in

### Tip: Best Practices for Developing Social Media Content

- Use numbered and bulleted lists when you can to break up the text
- Include video and images when you can
- Keep language simple and concise
- Always have your audience in mind
- Invest in social media routinely and update audiences regularly - not only before a campaign or event
the back of this guide to make sure that your social media communication is aligned with your broader communications goals.

**Supplying sub-national communicators with best practices and key messages.**

It’s important that communicators across levels use social media to address vaccination promotion, outbreak, and crises specifically and that those communications are aligned. Share the key social media messages that you’ve identified in your social media strategy, as well as best practices for using social media with sub-national levels. Social media best practices include:

- Make sure all social media content is useful—don’t create content for content’s sake.
- Decide on the message first, determine the format (blog post, tweet, video, infographic, etc.) second.
- Keep communications concise and clear. The shorter, the better.
- Always respond to user feedback in a constructive way. Keep your responses focused on the facts, be transparent and empathetic, and use clear and simple language that’s easy to understand. When responding to a rumour or misconception, don’t repeat the myth (that just reinforces it). Show that you understand the user by reiterating their concerns and feelings.

**Identifying who social media influencers are and engaging them in vaccination communication efforts.**

Because influencers already have large followings, their media channels present an already-established opportunity to reach users with positive vaccination messaging, especially if your office doesn’t already have established social media channels. Provide influencers with key messages, the core communication strategy, and information about upcoming vaccination events to share with their followers. Pick influencers who already have an established following among your target audience and who your audience sees as credible and authentic. It’s also important that the influencer’s existing social media presence matches the vaccine messaging (i.e., would it make sense for them to be posting about vaccines?) Use the Influencer Assessment in the back of this guide worksheet to guide this process.

**Crafting an ongoing social media plan.**

Once established, continuing social media monitoring efforts is essential to stay up to date with the comments, concerns, and beliefs associated with vaccination that change over time and in response to vaccination-related events. Track the amount of negative content related to vaccinations and analyse the questions and concerns that are most often raised. It is during the monitoring stages that the effectiveness of social media communication is evaluated and measured in order to create efficient and sustainable social media engagement that is based on real-life feedback.

Frequently share your findings with subnational levels so they can continue to refine their social media communications with up-to-date information.

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**A Note on Campaigns**

There’s a difference between developing and executing ongoing social media efforts focused on promoting vaccination, which is the focus of this field aid, and social media campaigns. Campaigns, which are focused on specific promotions, have a beginning and an end and are generally centered on a special activity. They can share the same content, but they have different goals and operate separately.

Established social media channels can be used for campaigns, but not the other way around—don’t set up social media channels just to share campaign communications.
1. Social Media Audit
   □ Identify popular social media channels that are utilized by key audience segments
   □ Determine how key audience segments use the channels (i.e. socially, professionally, for informational purposes, etc.)
   □ Determine if and how vaccines are discussed:
     - Are there particular user groups that discuss vaccines?
     - Are there any parenting or child health groups that discuss vaccines?
     - Are there anti-vaccination groups that discuss vaccination?

2. Social Media Strategy Development
   □ Develop a social media strategy based on the findings from the landscape audit
     - Define your community’s most pressing needs
     - Decide what communications (including social media) you will use to address those needs
     - Choose which social media channels you will use to disseminate that information
     - Define what messages work best on which platform
     - Create a social media communication plan for crisis events

3. Update and Adapt Communications for Social Media
   □ Review your current communications plan and identify what will work on social media
   □ Adapt appropriate content for social media

4. Brief and Prepare Sub-National Communicators
   □ Share the findings of the social media landscape audit
   □ Share best practices for social media communication
   □ Share key messages to be used in social media communication

5. Identify and Engage Social Media Influencers
   □ Identify popular social media influencers whose social media presence aligns with vaccination messaging
   □ Supply them with necessary communication materials
     - Key messages
     - The core communications strategy
     - Information about vaccination and events

6. Crafting an ongoing social media plan
   □ Track the amount of negative and positive content related to vaccines
   □ Track the frequently asked questions and concerns
   □ Share findings with subnational levels
SUB-NATIONAL AND DISTRICT LEVEL

There are six key activities involved in this effort and two additional activities just for district-level communicators. Key activities at the subnational level are:

1. Review the social media messages provided by the national team.
2. Review the national social media landscape guide.
3. If there are differences between the national considerations and your area, create a social media strategy suited to your specific level.
4. Integrate the tactics from the new social media strategy by reviewing your existing communications.
5. Identify and engage local influencers.
6. Create a tailored social media monitoring plan.

On the district level there are two additional activities:

1. Incorporate social media findings into health worker training.
2. Train select health workers to use social media.
Review the social media messages provided by the national team.
Think about how the messages you were given might be different from the communication plan for your level. How could the messages be changed to better meet the needs of your specific community? Some potential differences to think about include:

- Different languages, dialects, and ethnicities
- Differences in preferred social media platforms based on specific audiences
- Differences in your audience’s vaccine-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour
- Different social influencers

Review the national social media landscape guide.
Consider the ways in which this too might be different from the social media landscape in your specific setting.

If there are differences, create a social media strategy suited to your specific level.
Use the findings from the national social media landscape analysis and supplement it with your own research to come up with a social media strategy for your level that fits within your current communications strategy.

Integrate the tactics from the new social media strategy by reviewing your existing communications.
Look over your communications material to see if there are elements that can be turned into social media content. Run those new social media tactics alongside your existing communications to better reach your audiences.
Identify and engage local influencers.
Influencers can help share vaccination messages through their established followings. Give influencers key messages, information on the core communication strategy, and upcoming events to disseminate. It's important to pick the influencers who:

- Have a relevant audience composed of users that vaccination efforts are trying to reach
- Have a large reach and post frequently
- Are perceived as credible and authentic
- Are compatible with vaccination messaging (i.e., would it be appropriate for them to be promoting vaccinations based on their social media identity?)

Use the Influencer Assessment worksheet in the back to help identify influencers.

Creating a tailored social media monitoring plan.
Your monitoring plan should track and define the specific social media platforms, channels, keywords, influencers, and topics your communications are targeting. Stay up to date with the comments, concerns, and beliefs associated with vaccination that change over time and in response to vaccination-related events. Track the amount of negative content related to vaccinations and analyse the questions and concerns that are most often raised. The following additional steps are for district levels only

Incorporate social media findings into health worker training.
Include data from social media audits in health worker training. This equips health workers to effectively respond to similar concerns that are raised during offline community interactions. This creates an opportunity to respond to concerns before they expand into crises.

Train select health workers to use social media.
Choose health workers who already have active social media accounts rather than train new users on the platforms. They can then use social media to effectively respond to anti-vaccination posts, participate in online discussions, and promote vaccination across forums.
Review the messages handed down from the national level
- Identify where they differ from your communication plan

Review the landscape guide handed down from the national level
- Identify how this is different from your social media landscape

If there are differences, adjust the strategy to suit your needs
- Supplement the national level materials with findings from your community

Review your existing communications strategy
- Incorporate social media
- Identify which pre-existing communications can be adapted to social media

Identify and engage local influencers
- Choose influencers with established followings whose accounts align with vaccination messaging
- Provide them with key messages, the core communication strategy, and information about upcoming events

Create a social media monitoring plan
- Define and track the social media platforms, channels, keywords, influencers, and topics relevant to your strategy
- Track negative vaccination content and frequently asked questions and concerns

On the district level only

Incorporate social media data into health worker training

Train select health workers to use social media
- Choose health workers who already have established social media accounts
HEALTH WORKER LEVEL

There are two ways that communication professionals can both improve their social media communication to help health workers use social media to support vaccination efforts. Communications professionals can teach health workers to use social media to:

**Drive support for vaccines and vaccination**

**Respond to vaccination concerns from caregivers and the community**

**Driving support for vaccines and vaccination**

Health workers can use social media to support 2YL and measles and rubella vaccination efforts by consistently sharing correct and reliable information through their social media accounts. They can also create groups through platforms like WhatsApp to discuss vaccination, provide support to community mobilizers and volunteers, and share schedules.

**Responding to vaccination concerns from caregivers and the community**

Having health workers respond to the concerns of their community is an important part of supporting vaccination efforts through social media. Interpersonal communication, even through social media, is one of the key components that facilitates behaviour change regarding 2YL and measles and rubella vaccination. How caregivers and community members are treated during interpersonal communication has an impact on their decisions to seek health care and whether or not they will change their behaviour or adopt new ideas. How health workers communicate with them is important.
When health workers discuss 2YL and measles and rubella vaccinations with community members, particularly when addressing concerns, health workers should:

1. **Keep your communication centred on facts.**
   Focus on the impact of vaccine prevented diseases rather than the vaccine itself.

2. **Establish themselves as credible sources.**
   Advise them to mention that they are medical professionals.

3. **Make community members feel like they have time.**
   Don’t communicate with community members in a hurried manner. Give them plenty of time to think, process, and respond as necessary.

4. **Be transparent and empathetic.**
   Show that they are listening and that they understand by repeating the user’s concerns.

5. **Use clear and simple language.**
   The easier a message is to understand, the better.

6. **Don’t immediately respond to hostile or inappropriate messages.**
   Advise health workers to consult with their communications professional to come up with an approach first.

When health workers address 2YL and measles and rubella vaccination-related concerns, there will likely be times when they will be confronted with myths about vaccines that caregivers and other community members believe to be true. Debunking myths is a delicate process, but if it can be achieved by following these communication steps:

1. **Avoid mentioning the myth while correcting it.**
   Mentioning the myth, even while debunking it, can backfire by reinforcing it. Focus on repeating facts instead.

2. **Focus on one correction.**
   It can be tempting to mention a variety of evidence that refutes a myth, but sharing too much information or overly complicated information can end up reinforcing the myth. A simple myth is easier to remember and more attractive than multiple or complicated truths.

3. **Keep language simple.**
   Use simple language and short sentences. Use subheadings and short paragraphs when writing and end on a strong closing message that people will remember and share with their friends and family.

4. **Offer an alternative explanation.**
   People use myths to help them understand or explain things. When myths are debunked, they leave gaps in understanding which need to be filled. Provide an alternative explanation based on facts or share why the myth was promoted in the first place.

5. **Use graphics.**
   They offer more clarity and less room for misinterpretation. Whenever possible use graphics to present facts and information.

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### Case Study: A social media initiative in the Ukraine

As part of the effort to address a polio outbreak in 2015, the Ukrainian social media network Vkontakte and Facebook were found to be common forums where people had vaccination-related conversations.

Researchers found that doctors and teachers gathered on Facebook while Vkontakte was used more frequently by users with personal interests in the issues, such as those deciding whether or not to vaccinate their children. The issue was that these latter conversations were happening without the presence of professionals, so misinformation was being spread and anti-vaccination rhetoric was dominating.

To address the discrepancy in information, the communications strategy focused on increasing the amount of credible facts and information across social media networks, but especially the Vkontakte network.

Through continued monitoring of social media networks, the quality of information reaching the public was found to have been increased through the communications strategy.

To read more about the initiative, visit this website: [http://www.comminit.com/polio/content/social-media-initiative-ukraine-analysis-online-conversations-polio-vaccination-and-rout](http://www.comminit.com/polio/content/social-media-initiative-ukraine-analysis-online-conversations-polio-vaccination-and-rout)
Operationalizing Your Social Media Plan

Step 1: Set goals for your social media plan in a collaborative and inclusive manner

The SMART system is a helpful tool to help you define your goals. Here’s a quick overview of the system:

- **Specific**: What exactly are we trying to achieve?
- **Measurable**: What are the numbers (including web analytics), so we’ll know when we’ve achieved it?
- **Achievable**: How is this going to get done?
- **Relevant**: Is this the right goal for this time and place? Are we the right people for this goal?
- **Time-sensitive**: When will this goal be achieved?

Step 2: Profile your intended audiences based on your goals and select which networks to focus on and which channels you would prioritize

- **Facebook**: Over 2 billion active monthly users and the widest demographic range of any social media platform
- **Twitter**: Fast-paced, high volume network with its demographics skewing to the under-30 age group
- **Pinterest/Instagram**: Pinterest can take time to start to generate results, but those results last

Step 3: Know your brand’s voice, plan content and create a social media schedule

Step 4: Consistently engage with fans and followers

Step 5: Monitor and measure your results

Step 6: Adjust your plan to achieve overall outcomes
Overarching communications goal: ___________________________________________________

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<th>CHANNEL</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>TARGET AUDIENCE</th>
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<td>List social media platform you will use and the message you plan to share</td>
<td>Describe how this channel is the right one for the message and how the message feeds back into the overarching communications goal</td>
<td>List the target audience for the message. E.g., health workers, fathers, mothers, etc</td>
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**Note:** Make sure that each box corresponds to your overarching communications goal.
**INFLUENCER ASSESSMENT**

Influencer name: __________________________
Channel: ________________________________

Check box if yes

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<td><strong>Engagement</strong></td>
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<td>Has a high (5-10) number of comments on recent post</td>
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<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Impact</strong></td>
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<td>Has other social media channels</td>
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<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
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<td>Has members of target audience and followers</td>
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<td><strong>Subject matter</strong></td>
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<td>Posts or shares health-related content</td>
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<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
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<td>Has posted at least once in the last week</td>
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