



**African Population and
Health Research Center**

Using social media for advocacy

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Session outline

- Definition of social media
- Why social media for advocacy?
- How to use social media for advocacy
- Tips on how to engage on social media to influence policy
- Crafting key messages
- Why Twitter?
- Practice exercise





What is social media?

Websites and applications through which users create online communities to:

1. Inform
2. Educate
3. Entertain

through sharing content real time

Examples of social media platforms:

Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn e.t.c

Social media for advocacy?



- It is the use of digital technology to contact, engage, inform, and mobilize a group of concerned people around an issue or cause.
- The purpose of using social media for advocacy is to motivate supporters to take action.

Why use social media for advocacy?

Social media:

- Costs little or nothing to set-up
- Has a potentially wide reach
- Allows you to share messages instantly
- Allows you to receive instant feedback
- Offers new opportunities to listen, engage, and monitor your progress
- [The Social Media Revolution](#) is a video that explores how social media is changing the world



How to use social media for advocacy?

- Develop a social media action plan: a step by step road map that spells out exactly how you'll achieve your SMART social media goal.
- Craft your main goal and objectives.
- Craft key messages.
- Identify your audience as well as the social media platforms they use.
- List down the resources needed for execution. For example, a social media manager who will coordinate the campaign.
- Determine how you will measure success.
- Develop a content plan / calendar of topics to post, outlining timing of advocacy requests and desired outcomes.

...opportunities to engage on social media

- Marking important days: participating in relatable campaigns to mark relevant international days. E.g International Safe abortion day, day of the African child
- Launching of reports
- Sharing communication products like policy briefs, fact sheets, blogs
- Celebrating achievements
- Using current hot topics to push your content e.g. if there is a story from the Ministry on the increase in teenage pregnancies, develop a quick campaign to push your content during this period



Practical tips on how to engage on social media for policy engagement in Liberia and Sierra Leone



Abortion Rights IE 

@freesafelegal



This blogpost from the Women's Health and Reproductive Rights Organization (WHRRO) speaks to the burden of unsafe abortion in Sierra Leone. [#solidarity](#) to our comrades in Sierra Leone in the global fight for [#FreeSafeLegalLocal](#)



girlsglobe.org

Fighting Unsafe Abortion and Abortion Stigma in Sierra Leo...

This blogpost speaks to the national burden of unsafe abortion in Sierra Leone - with a law from 1861 that bans ...

1. Join social media platforms where critical conversations are happening e.g Twitter

Cont...

2. Curate your feed by following people/accounts that relate to your work locally, regionally and globally e.g. fellow SRHR advocates/partners, Ministry of Health, They will keep you updated with latest developments in your field
3. Lend your voice to conversations around SRHR that may interest you by engaging- tweet, tag, retweet, like, reply (***repeat**)
4. Use hashtags relevant to the conversation - you will reach more people e.g **#healthmatters #liberateabortion #abortionisessential**
5. Stay visual - photos, videos & graphics have greater appeal

...sample key messages

- In Sub-Saharan Africa, more than **three-quarters (77%)** of abortions are estimated to be unsafe
- In Sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated **33 abortions** occur annually per **1,000** for women aged **15–49**
- Among women who become pregnant without intending to be, an estimated **37%** terminate the pregnancy

Source: The Guttmacher Institute Factsheet - Abortion in Sub-Saharan Africa

...why Twitter ?

- **83%** of the world's leaders are on it! Also popular with journalists, experts/thought-leaders/influencers, donor organizations, politicians, gvt ministries, non-profits etc.
- It allows crisp and targeted communication (**in only 280-characters**)
- It focuses on **keywords** in your posts hence reaching a wider audience - not limited to your friends list
- Acts as a real-time source of news. You can also stay on top of **trending topics** based on preferred subjects. You can also search/join specific conversations using hashtags e.g **#SRHR #healthmatters #reproductiverights**

Practice Exercise:

Use the template provided to develop a social media action plan to mark the International Safe abortion day - September 28, 2022.



Our Contacts:

Reach out to us, Doris or Jane with your questions or suggestions at gi@aphrc.org



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THANK YOU



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