

UNFPA

Policy Title	UNFPA Social Media Policy
Previous title (if any)	n/a
Policy objective	The UNFPA Social Media Policy sets out the objectives and parameters for scaling up engagement with new digital media to advance the mission and mandate of UNFPA. Specifically, the policy aims to: encourage UNFPA personnel to use social media to communicate, and help them do so with confidence; ensure that the organization speaks with one voice in the digital realm by streamlining the Fund’s social media activities and reinforcing its brand through consistent messaging, graphics and images; help protect the reputation and integrity of the UNFPA and the United Nations as a whole, as well as the privacy, security and well-being of UNFPA’s employees. The Social Media Policy is supported by a Social Media Strategy and Social Media Guidelines, which outline approaches and provide practical guidance on digital platforms based on good practices.
Target audience	All UNFPA personnel
Risk control matrix	Control activities that are part of the process are detailed in the Risk Control Matrix .
Checklist	N/A
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Policy owner unit	Media and Communications Branch, Division of Communications and Strategic Partnerships
Approval	Link to signed approval template

UNFPA SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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I. Purpose

The UNFPA Social Media Policy sets out the objectives and parameters for scaling up engagement with digital media to advance the mission and mandate of UNFPA. It reflects and responds to the rapid and constant change within the digital media realm. It provides a policy framework to govern UNFPA's social media activities. It aims to provide flexibility to allow personnel to take advantage of opportunities offered by social media to communicate rapidly and appropriately while at the same time providing guidance that protects UNFPA, its personnel and the United Nations as a whole from any unnecessary risk, such as security or reputational risks caused by the inadvertent publishing of sensitive information, for example.

In support of this overall objective, the policy aims to:

- Encourage UNFPA personnel to use social media to communicate, and to help them do so with confidence.
- Ensure that the organization speaks with one voice in the digital realm by streamlining the Fund's social media activities and reinforcing its brand through consistent messaging, graphics and images.
- Help protect the reputation and integrity of the UNFPA and the United Nations as a whole, as well as the privacy, security and well-being of UNFPA's employees.

The policy is primarily designed to inform use of the official social media owned by UNFPA, including Country Office, Regional Office and Headquarters channels. However, UNFPA personnel must ensure that they are familiar with and adhere to the directions of this policy for both official and private use of social media. The use of social media by UNFPA and its personnel must be aligned with the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#) without exception.

II. Policy

This policy is applicable to staff members as well as to non-staff personnel, including individual service contractors, individual consultants and interns. Staff members and non-staff personnel are referred to in this policy as "personnel".

The following are the roles and responsibilities of UNFPA personnel on social media.

UNFPA personnel are personally responsible for any online activity undertaken using a UNFPA e-mail address, and/or which can be traced back to a UNFPA domain, and/or which uses UNFPA assets including the organization's computers, tablets, smartphones or network infrastructure. Even when logged into a personal account, such as a webmail account like Gmail or Yahoo!, personnel should be aware that it can be traced to UNFPA as it is being distributed via UNFPA's network with technology owned or authorized by UNFPA.

The unfpa.org address attached to the name of someone working for UNFPA implies that they are acting on the organization's behalf. UNFPA personnel must not use a UNFPA email address or UNFPA assets for social media activity as all actions are public and employees are fully responsible for any and all said activities. When making personal comments in an online publishing space, personnel should use a disclaimer in ways and in places that clearly indicates their affiliation with UNFPA so that online communities are aware of this relationship and other community members can identify their opinions as solely their own and not those of their employer.

At no time is it acceptable for UNFPA personnel, either in a professional or personal capacity, to criticize or try to discredit a Government. At the same time, it is understood that UNFPA personnel, as international civil servants, may speak freely in support of the Fund's policies. Your objective is always to further UNFPA's mandate and to protect and promote the rights of the people that UNFPA serves, particularly the women and girls of the most excluded and marginalized communities. When faced with obstacles to the mandate and/or violations of rights, your message should be focused on UNFPA's position rather than criticizing the Government or other duty bearers.

UNFPA personnel should transparently and proactively disclose their identities on social media and, where appropriate, their affiliation with UNFPA and their professional and/or personal interest in communicating, based on their professional responsibilities regarding social media. UNFPA has developed three social media profiles to help identify which type of social media user matches their role. More information on these profiles can be found in the companion document, [UNFPA Social Media Guidelines](#).

The three social media profiles are:

a) Professional user

“Professional users” are either required or authorized to use social media on behalf of UNFPA as a direct form of online communications with our stakeholders. This role requires either formal training or a specific position within the organization which necessarily involves the use of social media. This may include a communications specialist in a regional or country office, for example. A “professional user” ultimately assumes similar responsibility for actions as does an official UNFPA spokesperson dealing with the media. “Professional users” are expected to use public (i.e. not private or “locked”) accounts and to adhere to the [UNFPA Global Communications Strategy](#) and the UNFPA Public Information and Communications Policy at all times.

b) Social professional

“Social professionals” are UNFPA employees with specific technical, policy or other expertise or interest in topics relevant to UNFPA and/or its stakeholders and partners. These employees are not “professional users” as defined above. A “social professional” should identify their employment

by UNFPA in their personal social media account biography or ‘About Me’ page, along with a disclaimer that the individual user’s views do not necessarily represent those of UNFPA.

c) Private user

“Private users” are those employees not specifically engaged in communicating the mission, vision or values of UNFPA in any formal capacity. In this sense, a “private user” is indistinguishable from any other social media user. “Private users” should still bear in mind the [UNFPA Global Communications Strategy](#) and the UNFPA Public Information and Communications Policy, and comply with their employment obligations under the [United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations](#), the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), and/or the terms of their contracts, even if they actively avoid engaging in online conversations relating to specific issues of interest to UNFPA and/or its stakeholders.

Refer to the Annex for a descriptive social media profile flow-chart illustrating roles and responsibilities of UNFPA personnel.

III. Procedures

The Social Media Policy requires all UNFPA personnel to adhere to the following policy directives:

All new official UNFPA social media accounts or channels must be approved by the Media and Communications Branch (MCB) using the [Service Agreement Form](#). No new account shall be launched or redesigned without prior approval.

The official UNFPA headquarters social media account must have administrative rights to all social media accounts locally and globally to avoid password loss and potential abuse. To guarantee this, make the account associated to mcb.office@unfpa.org an administrator on your social media page and submit your password and login details to the head of the social media team in New York with a copy to the Regional Communications Adviser.

All official UNFPA accounts and channels must be in line with UNFPA branding guidelines. The standard naming format for all UNFPA social media networks is UNFPACountryname. Should this name already be in use, use instead UNFPA_Countryname or UNFPA-Countryname. In case all of these options are not available, please contact the UNFPA headquarters social media team. Any exception must be approved by the Chief of the Media and Communications Branch.

All existing UNFPA social media channels which do not align with these guidelines shall be updated to conform to the branding guidelines and standards.

All official UNFPA social media channels must be in line with this policy, and the [UNFPA Social Media Strategy](#) and [UNFPA Social Media Guidelines](#). UNFPA headquarters reserves the right to close official social media accounts if they do not comply with the UNFPA Public Information and Communications Policy and the Social Media Policy, Strategy or Guidelines.

All UNFPA social media channels shall respect all other relevant UNFPA policies and guidelines, including the [UNFPA Global Communications Strategy](#).

Applicable law must be obeyed at all times. Personnel shall not post any information or participate in any online activity that violates applicable local, state or national laws. While an action may be undertaken in one jurisdiction, the nature of the internet is that it crosses borders. Many social media platforms may be hosted outside of the country in which they are being used, and authorities in those jurisdictions may seek to enforce violations of their local laws by international operators. If there is any question about whether a potential posting or activity violates applicable law, members of personnel through the UNFPA Country Office Representative, Regional Communications Adviser or Regional Director should consult with the Chief of the Media and Communications Branch who may contact the Chief of the Legal Unit for further guidance. The information included in this paragraph is without prejudice to the privileges and immunities of the United Nations, including UNFPA.

UNFPA personnel must honour the terms of the [UNFPA Global Communications Strategy](#) and the UNFPA Public Information and Communications Policy, and their obligations under the [Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service](#), and the [United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations](#), as well as any contract the UNFPA have with any partner, donor or stakeholder, especially with regard to confidentiality.

It is inappropriate to disclose or use UNFPA's or a stakeholder's confidential information in any form of online media.

Personnel must respect others' privacy, opinions and beliefs at all times.

UNFPA personnel are to gain case-by-case *or* standing approval from supervisors or other suitable leaders within the organization before communicating online about a stakeholder or partner, *or* before otherwise responding on UNFPA's or a stakeholder's behalf. Any such permission from a stakeholder or partner should be obtained in writing prior to commenting online. Also, care and discretion should be exercised in tone and choice of forum when considering writing about any other organization online, including governments, corporations or other non-governmental organizations, to name just a few examples. Other organizations may be stakeholders, critics of our partners, or potential *future* stakeholders or donors. When using social media, personnel should always use a tone that is appropriate for their status as international civil servants.

If a blogger or any other online participant posts an inaccurate, accusatory or negative comment about UNFPA or its partners, personnel should not respond without prior approval from a relevant supervisor. UNFPA has a Reputational Crisis Team, located within the Media and Communications Branch, and its regional counterparts located with the Regional Office/s, which are tasked with considering the appropriate way to manage such situations. They should be informed and consulted. Personnel can contact the coordinator of the Reputational Crisis Team in the Media and Communications Branch or the Regional Office.

Personnel should avoid personal attacks, ‘trolls’ and other hostile personalities.

Personnel may wish to voice their opinion in response to content that they disagree with, but should not escalate any conversation to a heated argument or personal attack on another person online. Personnel are to remain calm, speak with a reasonable tone of voice (including punctuation) and focus on presenting or dealing with facts while trying to understand and credit the other person's point of view. Additionally, personnel should make a conscious decision to avoid communicating with hostile individuals, or internet ‘trolls’, who are agitating specifically for a response, in an effort to avoid personal, professional, or credibility attacks being directed at them.

Before posting any content, personnel must identify any copyrighted material with appropriate permissions. This is particularly important with regard to the use of applications such as Google Maps, which have distinct terms of use that must be considered before corporate use.

When publishing any material online that includes another author’s or publisher’s direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos, or videos, appropriate citations and/or references must be used. A link to the original material should be provided where applicable. When using content licensed under Creative Commons, the author’s exact conditions must be respected. The factual accuracy and truthfulness of any contribution should be evaluated before publishing. If a correction needs to be made due to an error, the corrections must be indicated as having been made and be just as visible as the original error, if not more so. More information on this can be found in the companion document: [UNFPA Social Media Guidelines](#).

Personnel should aim to add value when participating in conversations on social media, to help build and maintain a reputation of trust among the relevant social media community.

UNFPA’s network or email lists of personnel’s personal social networks are not to be used to influence stakeholder-related polls, rankings, recommendations, or web traffic. This is particularly important given the role UNFPA personnel operate as mandated advocates for some of the world’s most vulnerable populations – the integrity and impartiality of UNFPA and its members of personnel must be maintained in all circumstances.

The size and breadth of UNFPA’s network also must not be used to unduly influence polls, rankings, or web traffic where said traffic is a measure of success. This is particularly important when considering online activities such as petitions – even if an online user is found to be calling for a specific action or policy with which UNFPA agrees, it is inappropriate for members of personnel, as international civil servants, to participate in these types of activities.

UNFPA personnel should carefully evaluate the online communities that they associate with, including when “friending” someone, “liking” something on a particular online platform, or “checking in”, using a location-based service. They should give strong consideration to their relationships with any partner, donor, stakeholder or other online influencer before “friending”, following or connecting with them via a social network, or “liking” particular content. Additionally, any UNFPA employee who has specific stakeholder contacts, such as journalists, should ask those individuals if they want to receive UNFPA communications via the social networking site.

Using a “Like” function does not allow the provision of any disclosure alongside the action. Personnel should consider whether their connections will interpret such an online action in the way they intend, or if there is an alternative action that might be clearer, such as Quoting a Tweet (instead of Re-Tweeting), Commenting instead of Liking, or adding a few words that explain why something has been “Liked”.

Personnel should always be respectful to UNFPA, their worldwide colleagues, the Fund’s partners and stakeholders, and their individual audiences. This applies to the type of information published, as well as the manner and context in which it is presented. Communications should be undertaken with a professional, but not overly formal, tone of voice.

Personnel shall follow the established rules of use published by the platform being used (whether that is social media, comment forms on websites, discussion forums etc.), in addition to observing the user behaviours outlined in this document. The terms and conditions can usually be found through a link off the home page of each site. Where this is not possible, the site’s administrator should be contacted.

These rules not only govern how users are expected to behave and interact on a particular site, but also who retains ownership of the content that users share on that site.

IV. Other – Compliance and Policy Owner

A. Compliance

Personnel should keep in mind that failure to abide by this policy may be considered wrongdoing and may lead to the imposition of sanctions.

B. Policy Owner

The Chief of the MCB is the owner of the UNFPA Social Media Policy.

Personnel are welcome to seek input from the MCB for clarification of this policy or to share specific ideas or submit requests regarding communications.

V. Process Overview Flowchart

No overview flow chart applicable.

VI. Risk Control Matrix

Control activities that are part of the process are detailed in the [Risk Control Matrix](#).

Annex I

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNFPA PERSONNEL ON SOCIAL MEDIA

