



**Government of Pakistan  
Ministry of Human Rights**



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# **INTERACTIVE TRAINING WORKSHOP**

## **Human Rights Communication & Advocacy**

### **SESSION 03**

# **USING SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS FOR ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS**

## WHY TWITTER?

Twitter should be a key tool for MoHR. It is a powerful distribution channel for research; it gives greater visibility in the day-to-day conversations about around human rights issues; and it helps reach key advocacy and media targets.

## CONTENT FOR TWEETS

1. Tweet your press releases, reports, op-eds, and letters: Tweet the headline, and then over the course of the day, tweet some other parts: the subhead, lede, pull-quotes, or conclusion. Tweeting the same link two or three times in one day is okay—different people may be drawn in by different re-wordings, or be viewing your tweets at different times of the day so think about reaching different time zones, too.
2. Provide links: Be sure to link to the article you're flagging or commenting on. A tweet by itself can't influence much. You want to use Twitter to help drive your advocacy targets toward our substantive material. Remember, the links will shorten automatically when you send your tweet, so don't worry about that: Twitter calculates your character count with that in mind.
3. Use hashtags. Use sparingly, usually one or two per tweet. For example, #Aug14 on Independence Day. Search topics to see what others are using. #Pakistan is common. Use event hashtags, too.
4. Live-tweet events: Consider tweeting from an MoHR conference or other public gathering related to MoHR, human rights or Pakistan more generally. Comment on what's being said and respond to others doing the same on Twitter. Remember though, if you are tweeting from an event, set the scene in your first tweet so your followers know what's going on. Also, try to use the hashtag that is being most commonly used for the conference to ensure the widest audience for your posts.
5. Be concise but careful: 140 characters is brief. Drop unnecessary articles & use abbreviations. Re-read before sending to make sure it says what you mean!
6. Tweet about the news: Tweet current events and add relevant links to MoHR materials, using hashtags for the country [Pakistan] or occasion concerned.

Once you tweet, you can't delete: Well, technically you can, but tweets can spread fast and be quoted by media quicker than you can find the delete button. Assume what you tweet will be on the record forever.

7. Don't forget the social aspect: They call it "social media" for a reason. Re-tweet others if you want to be retweeted. Follow others if you want to be followed.
8. Once you get the hang of it, tweet at least three to five times a day to maintain consistency and build an audience. Your tweets will go nowhere unless you have some followers yourself.

## BUILDING A FOLLOWING

1. Find and follow people and organizations with similar interests such as other government departments and institutions, multilateral organizations, UN bodies, policy think tanks, human rights and civil society organizations and so on. This can be through [searches within Twitter](#). Following others is one sure way to announce your online presence to those in your specialist field, and they will hopefully want to follow you back.
2. Live-tweet events you attend: Use the event hashtag, comment on the proceedings and get noticed. This is a particularly good way to be seen and followed by people interested in your field of expertise.
3. Add social media handles to all communications: Your Twitter handle should be in your email signature, on your business card, in your bio when you write an op-ed, in press releases, and so on. If you appear on television, ask if they'll add your handle next to your name/title or next to the online version of the interview

## ADVANCED STRATEGIES FOR PUBLIC ADVOCACY

Engaging directly with your target audience is an essential part of social media, and its key advantage. On Twitter, you can call out a person in public, try to get their attention, and then, if you're lucky, strike up a conversation with them about a topic that concerns you. People will also comment on and question your tweets, giving you chances to explain further your position. And it all happens with hundreds or even thousands of others following your debate.

BUT—and, this is absolutely critical—you don't have to engage everyone all the time. Just because you can start or continue a conversation doesn't mean you want to.

The trick of engaging on social media is learning how and when to do it, and when not to. There are no hard and fast rules to this. It comes with experience—lots of experience—and anyone who says they've figured it all out almost certainly hasn't.

Still, here are a few ideas to get you started and keep you from making basic mistakes. First, classifying targets can help us understand if and how we should engage with them. Here are three broad categories of people who can be reached using Twitter.

1. **Decision makers**: More and more top-level public officials are on Twitter. Engagement with them on Twitter may be rare—and may often be more on subjects of their choosing rather than ours—but the conversations can be useful. Since those will include Pakistan's journalists, the engagement can help create media buzz.
2. **Policy makers**: Some may be very actively tweeting, while others may lurk passively. But it is hard to find desk officers, policy advisers, and others in the policy-making machinery today who are not on Twitter as a way to keep up with news and discussions around their key subjects.
3. **Journalists**: They are a vital advocacy audience for MoHR and most are on twitter. Many interactions with journalists—arranging interviews, pre-releasing reports, fielding questions—have moved from email to Twitter. They will likely be the most willing to engage and offer the longest substantive open conversations, which gives us a chance to also reach others who may be following as well.