**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TOOL**

HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT SHERPA MAP ACTIVITIES?

Social media may be used strategically to create and maintain stakeholder engagement. Generating awareness, along with information sharing and word-of-mouth, cultivating long-term relationships, developing new cooperation and exchange relations, and building image and reputation, are the primary purposes for stakeholder engagement. Thought awareness raising and increase community engagement can be identified as the most relevant social media engagement strategies for SHERPA MAPs.

- **awareness raising**. SHERPA MAPs address topics that in most cases already well known by both scientists, policymakers and civil society actors. However, the way those topics are dealt with through the creation of interfaces where all relevant actors are engaged, may be considered an interesting novelty. To create authentic and lasting awareness, it is therefore recommended that MAP Facilitators and Monitors avoid solely publishing promotional messages, and instead focus on content that emphasizes the values of SHERPA first.

- **increase community engagement.** For SHERPA MAPs to be successful, it is not only important that the right stakeholders are made aware of the project's objectives and potential impacts on them. What also matters is that they decide to actively engage into its MAPs' activities. Useful tactics that SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors might find effective to achieve that goal include giving them something to do. Even something as simple as asking a question can increase their engagement rate.

Content should be the centre of MAPs Facilitators' and Monitors' social media strategies. To create engaging content here some useful tips and tricks:

- Use the SHERPA project logo, hashtags (#SHERPA2020, #EUrural) and project handle **(@rural_interfaces)** to establish an identity that makes it easy for your messages to be immediately recognised as associated to the MAP's work.

- Take advantage of user-generated content and interactive content to allow your social media followers to serve as billboards and provide an incentive for target stakeholders to interact with you. Whether it is using a hashtag or posting a comment or a photo, encouraging customer content is a good move for boosting your engagement rate. Identify the usernames of the key stakeholders for the outcomes of the MAP (e.g. Municipalities, National Rural Networks, Farmers unions, etc.)
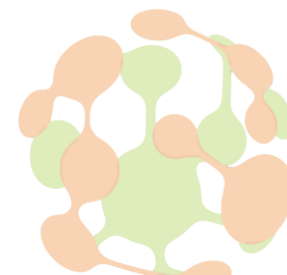
- Likewise, profit from every opportunity to interact or pick your follower stakeholders' ideas. Even something as simple as asking a question or posting a poll can do the trick[1].

- It is also paramount to underline that stakeholders usually expect prompt responses but also meaningful conversations on a regular basis. Hence, it is advised to SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors to ensure conversations or engagement opportunities are not left unattended. Timeliness is essential.

Here below follows a brief presentation of the main social media channels. It is essential to stress the need to choose the channels used by the stakeholders one is trying to reach out to – which might not always be the same ones one is already using. The tools are presented in alphabetical order, not in order of priority.

Facebook is an online social media and social networking service with more than 2 billion users worldwide that can be accessed from devices with Internet connectivity, such as personal computers, tablets and smartphones. After registering, users can create a customized profile revealing information about themselves. They can post text, photos and multimedia which is shared with any other users that have agreed to be their 'friend', or, with a different privacy setting, with any reader. Users can also receive notifications of their Facebook friends' activities and activities of Facebook pages they follow.

SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors can use a Facebook account to reach out to project stakeholders, in particular those not fully covered by LinkedIn, as well as for public outreach and for showcasing outputs.

Twitter. is a microblogging and social networking service on which users post and interact with messages known as 'tweets'. Registered users can post, like, and retweet tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Users access Twitter through its website interface, through Short Message Service (SMS) or its mobile-device application software ('app'). This social media channel can be used for short news flashes, using a clear and crisp style, not too descriptive or institutional. It allows for texts of a maximum length of 280 characters.

It is recommended to SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors to use Twitter to communicate instantly and engage with the target audiences from society, science and policy stakeholders. In each message the project 'handle' should be used: @rural_interfaces. Likewise, SHERPA-relevant hashtags (#SHERPA2020, #EUrural) will allow streamline communication of specific products and actions helping stakeholders connect outside of physical meetings and boosting exchanges among them.

Twitter can also play an important role during MAP events, where live tweeting will be enabled. Live tweeting will participate in creating a knowledge community linking participants, panel and experts, as well as audiences following the events remotely.

SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors can benefit from Twitter for:

- posting relevant news and information related to the work done within SHERPA MAPs,

- following relevant accounts from key stakeholders and engaging with them (e.g. retweet)

- creating conversation with followers, sparking debate on hot topics addressed by SHERPA MAPs, and gathering their views,

- providing relevant content (information on latest trends and new relevant developments),

- posting or retweeting about events, reports and initiatives from other projects or other activities from relevant stakeholders,

- promoting other events connected to the SHERPA project.

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[1] For more guidance on online polling please read also the guidance sheet on How to engage with stakeholders during a SHERPA MAP event.

Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking service with more than 1 billion users worldwide. Instagram allows users to upload photos and videos to the service, which can be edited with various filters, and organized with tags and location information. An account's posts can be shared publicly or with pre-approved followers. Users can browse other users' content by tags and locations, and view trending content. Users can like photos and follow other users to add their content to a feed. It also allows messaging features, the ability to include multiple images or videos in a single post, as well as 'Stories', which allows users to post photos and videos to a sequential feed, with each post accessible by others for 24 hours each.

This channel can be interesting for SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors to share visual outputs (i.e. on-the-ground snapshots shared by participants in a MAP event).

LinkedIn is a business and employment-oriented social media service that operates via websites and mobile apps. It is mainly used for professional networking and counts about 650 million registered members in 150 countries. LinkedIn allows members to create profiles and 'connections' to each other in an online social network which may represent real-world professional relationships. Members can invite anyone (whether an existing member or not) to become a connection.

For SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors LinkedIn can be a relevant channel for networking with people and professional organisations from the target stakeholders mainly belonging to the private sector and academia.

SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors can benefit from LinkedIn for:

- Joining specific groups to discuss ideas and share related news.
- Creating and animating groups to discuss specific matters related to the scope of the MAPs.
- Sharing status update to ask questions to people in the network or share news or insight.
- Identifying more stakeholders, companies, researchers, policymakers, etc., potentially interested by the MAPs results and engaging with them,
- Informing about events and meetings organised by the SHERPA MAPs.

Youtube is a video-sharing platform that allows users to upload, view, rate, share, add to playlists, report, comment on videos, and subscribe to other users. Unregistered users can only watch videos on the site, while registered users are permitted to upload an unlimited number of videos and add comments to videos.

A dedicated YouTube channel can be useful for SHERPA MAP Facilitators and Monitors to publish and collect MAPs related multimedia products.