

# **#SocialMedia code of engagement for public health risk communications @WHO**

**Monika Gehner, World Health Organization  
RICOMET 2015, 15 June 2015**



**World Health  
Organization**

## GOOD HEALTH ADDS LIFE TO YEARS

Mirtha Nordet, with her grandson Damien  
Retired ophthalmologist

**WHO on social  
media...**

**communicates  
risks (not just in  
emergencies)...**

**in a way that  
aims to build  
trust – at all  
times.**

# The World Health Organization - the UN's directing and coordinating authority on international health work

## The Cassandra Crossing



## Contagion

# Fukushima nuclear accident was a social media paradigm shift for WHO

## Results for salt

Tweets

Tweets with links

Tweets near you

People



**cnnbrk** CNN Breaking News

China trying to head off "**salt** panic" in wake of Japan nuclear crisis.

<http://on.cnn.com/geuDYC>

17 hours ago

Top Tweet



**whonews** WHO News

Iodized **#salt** doesn't have enough **#iodine** to protect you from **#radiation**. Too much **#iodizedsalt** can cause poisoning. **#japan** **#globalhealth**

16 hours ago



Top Tweet





# A few days after the first WHO tweets...

## Chinese seek refunds as salt panic subsides

(AFP) – Mar 19, 2011  

SHANGHAI — Chinese consumers caught up in panic salt buying in the mistaken belief it would protect against radiation from Japan's nuclear crisis are finding stores are refusing to refund their hoards of salt.

Supermarkets said they were unable to refund purchases of iodised salt, citing rules that say food cannot be returned if it has no quality problems, state media reported Sunday.

Panicked shoppers had set off a run on iodised salt despite government reassurances that China faced no danger from Japan's March 11 earthquake and tsunami, which left the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant leaking radiation.

A 60-year-old Shanghai woman told China Central Television (CCTV) that she called the police after a store refused to give her a refund for 50 packages of salt that she bought last week.



Chinese shoppers crowd a shop in an effort to buy salt in Lanzhou, northwest China's Gansu province

# More details

- Tuesday, 16 June, 09:00, Splendens Hall: Use of risk communications/social media in the context of the Fukushima nuclear accident

# Seeing the value of social media during Fukushima accident, WHO has been investing in social media to:

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- provide accurate, accessible, understandable, useable information on a wide variety of health issues in a timely fashion and more widely;
- listen and communicate public health risks;
- protect WHO's reputation and credibility;
- articulate policy and practice for better health.

# WHO: 4<sup>th</sup> most followed int'l organization



Source: How international organizations tweet, Twiplomacy, March 2015 (90 orgs analysed)



# WHO: 5<sup>th</sup> most effective int'l organization by average number of retweets per tweet



Source: How international organizations tweet, Twiplomacy, March 2015 (90 orgs analysed)



All  
communication  
about health is  
about risk.

## GOOD HEALTH ADDS LIFE TO YEARS

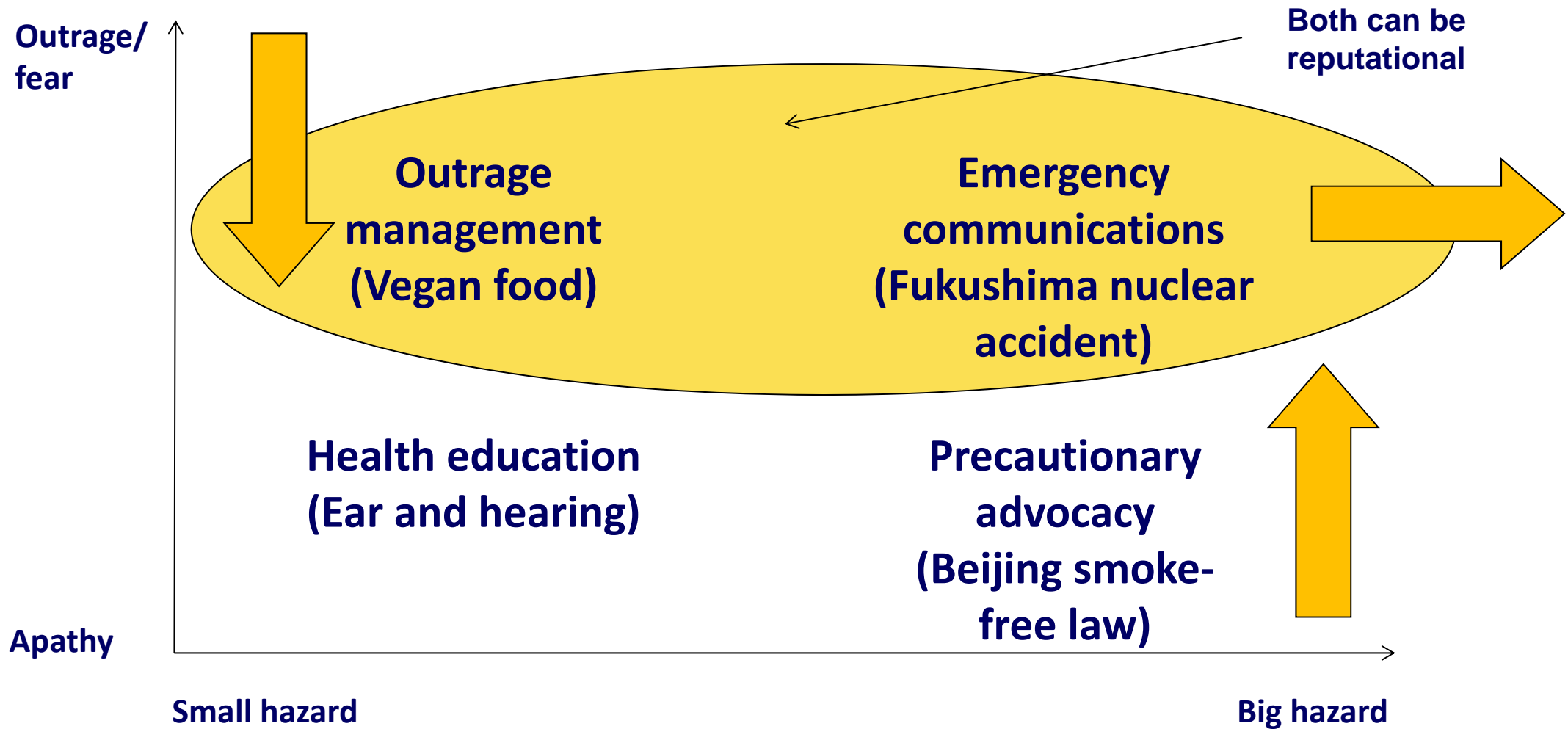
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# Align people's perception with actual risk



\* by Peter M. Sandman <http://www.psandman.com>, adapted by WHO



# Outrage management

## Veganism = mental illness?



**Tatiana M** @TanyaMargo

@WHO Russian blogs are going crazy about F63.8, bloggers say "veganism is now considered as mental illness". Is there any basis for this?

Expand

27 Mar



**Fabrizio Marcolini** @fmarcoz

@WHO Hi, I would like you to clear up the position you have on Vegetarianism, I want the facts, what your people said and why

Expand

28 Mar



**WHO** @WHO

#Сыроедение, #вегетарианство и #строгое вегетарианство не связаны с какими-либо нарушениями психического здоровья.

Expand

30 Mar



**WHO** @WHO

Raw #food eating, #vegetarian or #vegan diet are not related to any kind of mental disorder.

Expand

30 Mar

radio

**THE VOICE OF RUSSIA**

Moscow Historical Museum displays children's clothing

Britain to face third round of military cuts

Third of Britain's chickens prone to cause food poisoning

**Vegetarians are sane – WHO**

Tags: Opinion & Analysis, Society, World, vegetarians

Mar 30, 2012 15:50 Moscow Time



# Emergency communications

## Typhoon Haiyan – working with the gov't

### feeding babies in emergencies what are the dangers?



#### infant formula

Lack of access to safe and clean water to prepare the infant formula and wash the feeding bottles.

Infant formula itself is not sterile and may be contaminated.

Feeding bottles are hard to sterilize with limited or no available cleaning utensils, water, fuel and other equipments.

Insufficient knowledge on proper use and preparation risks over or under diluting infant formula.

Infant formula does not contain protective properties such as antibodies found in breastmilk.

Poor sanitation increases risk of contamination of infant formula during preparation.

Supplies of infant formula are often not sustainable.

Powdered milk is often used for feeding infants under 6 months, which increases risks for diarrhoea.



#### breastmilk

No dangers, really.

Babies aged up to 6 months need only breastmilk.  
Exclusively breastfed babies are the healthiest.

#RubyPH

This infographic is supported by World Health Organization  
Source: WHO, National Nutrition Council

### Breastfeeding is life-saving for babies in Philippines typhoon emergency

UN agencies stress need for breastfeeding support to mothers in affected areas

Joint news release: WHO, UNICEF

(NDA)

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als to be  
social support

220,000  
PREGNANT  
WOMEN



147,000  
BREASTFEEDING  
MOTHERS

70,000  
NEWBORN  
BABIES



needing care

In a December 8 bulletin, Janette Garin, the acting Health Secretary, said the Department of Health is working to ensure infant formula doesn't make its way into evacuation centres set up in the midst of Tropical Storm Ruby.



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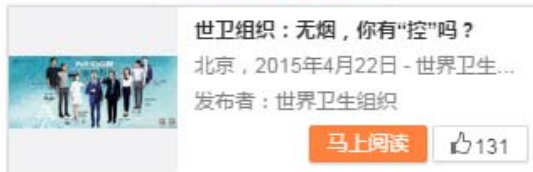
# Precautionary advocacy

## #RUFREE Smoke-free Beijing

### WHO Weibo account



**置顶** 【有控请举手！】昨天下午，世卫组织年度控烟海报巨献#你有控吗#正式发布啦！海报获得了@潘石屹 @张靓颖 @王艳 @鲍春来 @张丰毅 @马天宇 @周柳建成 @任泉 的大力支持！群星共同呼吁，无烟中国，你有控吗？！详情见（还有连接可以下载全部海报哦~~）：[世卫组织：无烟，...](#)



世卫组织：无烟，你有“控”吗？  
北京，2015年4月22日 - 世界卫生...  
发布者：世界卫生组织

马上阅读 131



### 无烟中国 Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention

他们是运动员，是演员，是歌手，是企业家。他们为青春健康的生活发声，支持戒烟，支持禁烟，保护所有人不受一手二手烟害。#你有控吗# 控烟海报发布会上见 @鲍春来 @王艳 @张靓颖 @潘石屹，6月1日起北京公共场所全面无烟，展望全国早日跟进！



4月22日 17:13 来自 HTC

### Health Education Centre



北京健康教育

//@北京西城健康教育://@卫生计生委控烟传播活动: 感谢靓颖一直以来对控烟的鼎力支持！  
#被吸烟 我不干# #你有控吗# @张靓颖 @世界卫生组织 @盖茨基金会 @控烟集结号 @张靓颖歌迷地带

@张靓颖

#你有控吗# 为我所有戒烟成功的朋友们点赞 @世界卫生组织



4月22日 16:04 来自 iPhone 6 Plus

转发 2641 | 评论 2785 | 39711

4月23日 11:13 来自 360安全浏览器



# Health education

## #EarCareDay Twitter chat



**WHO** @WHO · Feb 28

Q: How can I keep my child's ears clean?

A: The ear cleans itself and does not require any active cleaning [#EarCareDay](#)

[Expand](#)

[Reply](#) [Delete](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)



**fatima** @fxeeshan · Feb 28

@WHO we are having an [#earache](#) epidemic at school. 5kids have complained of biting pain in ear so far. What to do?

[Expand](#)

[Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)



**Laura Bee** @lauramjbee · Feb 28

@fxeeshan @WHO it could be an infection. A few drops of warmed olive oil massaged in the ear for relief.

[Expand](#)

[Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)



**WHO** @WHO · Feb 28

.@lauramjbee Do not insert or put anything into the ear, incl. oil. More here [goo.gl/uE1Cna](http://goo.gl/uE1Cna)

@fxeeshan Pls consult a doctor urgently

[Hide conversation](#)

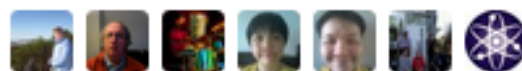
[Reply](#) [Delete](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

RETWEETS

28

FAVORITES

17



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# Listen to your communities' beliefs, anxieties, opinions and knowledge - engage

- Experts and the public do not perceive risk the same way.
- The danger posed by a hazard is not the only important factor in risk perception. People may be driven by fear, outrage, the media.
- Risk perception is reality for risk communications, regardless of if there is a real threat or not.
- Listen to your community's concerns, anxieties, rumours, misinformation and levels of outrage to adjust the reality by using the appropriate communications strategy.
- Two-way engagement with empathy is key. One-way dissemination of facts and figures is not enough.



Social media is  
about them!



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# Trust is crucial for people to follow advice that is healthy and safe for them

## Trust

- is by far the greatest factor in communicating risk;
- creates favourable conditions for actors to accept decisions;
- is the perception that other actors will refrain from opportunistic behaviour, i.e. that their behaviour is more or less stable;
- needs to be earned: cultivated at all times, in all risk communications, before it is needed, not just in emergencies;
- is strong where organizations are clear about their values and walk their talk.



# Social media help to build trust

- Trust develops when actors engage with each other.
- Trust is one of the most important attributes on social media. It is also one of the more easily lost ones.
- Without engagement, trust will easily diminish.
- Social media allow to listen to your communities and engage many-to-many to build trust.
- Trust is built, strengthened, maintained and/or restored through consistently trustworthy behaviour.
- Trust is essentially social and normative rather than individual.

# Social media code of engagement to build trust

## United Nations and WHO ethical principles

- Loyalty – e.g. digital ambassadors for the Organization
- Accountability – e.g. anticipate impact of actions on organizational objectives
- Independence – e.g. not to be unduly influenced by a third party
- Technical excellence – e.g. evidence-based content, accurate, accessible
- Impartiality – e.g. not favouring a particular entity, being as close as possible to "all"
- Honesty – e.g. acknowledge Member States' contributions, copyrights
- Discretion – e.g. confidentiality, embargoes
- Respect – e.g. diversity of opinions, tone of voice
- Integrity – e.g. walking the talk at all times as international civil servants



Engage to build  
trust at all times!

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# Thank you!



**Mats C**  
@swedeinsf



+ Follow

@WHO thank you for clarifying - and responding on a Saturday! I really appreciate it!!

Stockholm



**Kaplan Medical**  
@KaplanMedical

1:22 PM - 10 Apr 2012

@WHO Your work is inspiring and noble. Thank you for all you do in public health initiatives, big and small.



3:48 PM - 14 Nov 2013



**Irene Kim**  
@Irene\_KF



+ Follow

@WHO I cannot believe all of these #depression tweets. People are so honest, so brave, to speak up. Thank you!



**Dr. Gia Sison**  
@giasison



+ Follow

@WHO Thank you for providing essential FAQs on Hepatitis. Very beneficial. We support your advocacy from the Philippines. More power!



12:14 PM - 25 Jul 2012



**Sue Atkins**  
@SueAtkins

@WHO thank you for your helpful info about #dementia sadly my mother in law is now suffering with it



**World Health Organization**