Factsheet 8: Influencers and how to choose them

Influencers on Social Media are people who have built a reputation for their knowledge on a particular topic. They post regularly on that topic and attract large, rapt followings. They are trendsetters with the authority to encourage followers to advocate for a cause or donate to it.

Influencers vary, as do their methods; you can group them by the niche in which they operate. Influencers who may appear low-level by certain criteria may look more influential when seen another way. For example, many mega-influencers are celebrities. Yet they may have less influence on their audience than real experts in a narrow niche. Some micro and even nano-influencers have a tremendous influence in their specialist field. They may help you target a specific sector of the population
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Types of Influencers by Followers

- **Mega-Influencers** - Mega influencers have vast numbers of followers on their networks. Although there are no fixed rules, a common view is that mega-influencers have more than a million followers on at least one social platform. Many mega-influencers are celebrities who gained their fame offline. They may be movie stars, sportspeople, musicians or TV personalities;
- **Macro-Influencers** - Macro-influencers are more accessible as influence marketers. They may have 40,000 to one million followers on a given social network;
- **Micro-Influencers** - Micro-influencers are ordinary people who have become known for their expertise in a certain area. They have usually gained a sizable Social Media following amongst devotees of that subject. Micro-influencers normally have 1,000 to 40,000 followers on a single social platform;
- **Nano-Influencers** - Nano influencers, or 'nanos' for short, are new to the influence marketing scene. They may have as few as 1,000 followers and no more than 5,000. But trying to define this kind of influencer by their follower count goes against what they stand for. They are ordinary but highly literate digital citizens, with a natural propensity to influence, and the size of their audience is not what matters. Deemed more genuine than macro influencers, nanos have a reputation for being more approachable, less commercially driven and easier to work with than the big shots.

Due Diligence to Identify Influencers

Identifying influencers is part of your Social Media Situation Analysis and needs to take into account:

- **Relevance:** Are the influencers you are considering relevant to your mission and purpose, and therefore to your audience? An influencer's past content must match your intentions and values. It is vital for UNHCR and partners to engage with the community to understand who they follow, like and consider relevant on Social Media;
- **Reach:** It is important to reach the people you are targeting but influencers with the largest followings may not always be the best for this. Do a bit of research on the influencer's audience. An individual may cater to a specific industry that is relevant to your mission but they could also have a younger audience than you are hoping to reach. Sometimes a smaller but higher quality audience may be right for your needs;
- **Values:** When doing Social Media marketing, it is really important to know your own values before trusting an influencer to uphold UNHCR's image. Your values and theirs must be a good match to ensure the relationship between your brand and the influencer is appropriate, effective and worthwhile.

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