

LISTEN TO ACT

SOCIAL AND
COMMUNITY
LISTENING
STRATEGY

2023-2025

**SOCIAL +
BEHAVIOUR
CHANGE**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategy aims to establish social and community listening as a critical tool for gathering community insights, that informs evidence-based Social and Behavior Change (SBC) action within UNICEF's East and Southern Africa Region (ESAR). The regional SBC priorities expected to benefit from social listening include but are not limited to Emergencies, Disease Outbreaks, Immunization, Education, Nutrition, Child Protection and Sanitation and Hygiene. The strategy also broadens the definition of social listening to encompass, publicly available online, offline, and on-ground data sources. Formulated through a detailed review and consultation process, the strategy reflects best practices and collective intelligence around social listening in the Regional and Country Office SBC teams.

Four principal stakeholders have been identified in the strategy: RO SBC Team, and CO SBC Teams, Governments and Partners, and Community Members. Unique challenges linked to each stakeholder are acknowledged and addressed through a series of carefully defined objectives and actions. For the RO SBC team, the need to inspire on-ground action from social listening activities is met by providing thought leadership and generating regular social listening reports, ultimately establishing a clear connection to the broader digital strategy.

CO SBC teams face the challenge of the resource-intensive nature of social listening. To address this, capacity-building programs, such as social listening technical training and the creation or expansion of specific social listening dashboards, will be implemented.

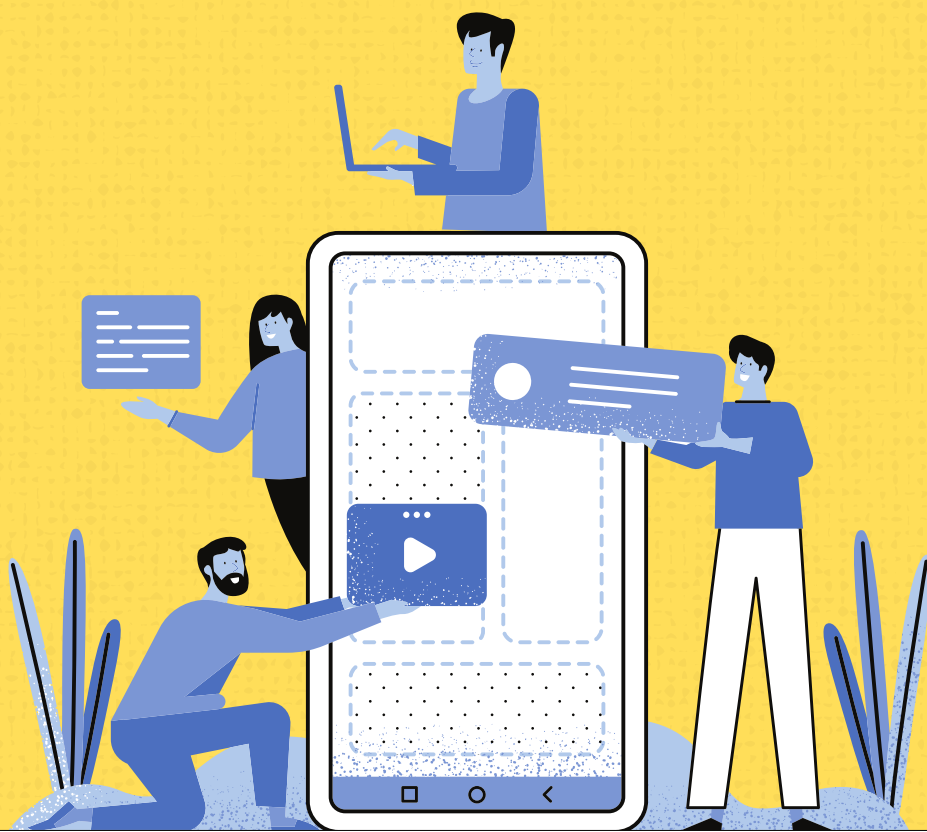
Moreover, monthly social listening reports and timely webinars focusing on misinformation management will be initiated, fostering better resource efficiency.

Government and partners may perceive social listening being largely digital and not representative of the whole country. This perception will be addressed by sharing social listening evidence, offering technical support for triangulating offline with digital social listening, and hosting webinars and conferences. These measures foster a more holistic approach to social listening, considering both digital and on-ground data.

For community members, a series of actions such as video series and community dialogue sessions based on social listening insights have been planned to address the issue of one-way communication in social listening. The introduction of these feedback loops intends to transform social listening into a more dynamic, two-way conversation, under the principle that Data Must Speak to decision makers, programme managers and communities.

The strategic framework in this document recommends country level adaptation, promoting customization based on unique needs and contexts. More importantly, it emphasizes the importance of translating social listening into actionable SBC interventions. Specific behavioral questions designed to generate actionable insights will guide social listening practices. The visibility of interventions and the data they generate is central to the strategy's approach to monitoring and evaluating of social listening, ensuring that each SBC intervention's impact is evaluated and tracked.

Social and community listening is the process of gathering and analyzing readily available information from online, offline, and on-ground sources to derive community insights that inform evidence-based Social and Behavior Change (SBC) action.



BACKGROUND

Social listening is a critical component of Social and Behavior Change (SBC) evidence base and data stream. Serving as an essential bridge between communities and stakeholders, such as UNICEF, it contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the public discourse and collective consciousness that inform behaviour and attitudes. With the capability to provide insights on information gaps, media narratives, and emerging misinformation, social listening offers a robust foundation for for informing targeted action across UNICEF and partner programming. This critical role is evidenced by UNICEF's work around AAP (Accountability to Affected People), especially under the information, communications, and community feedback pillars.

This increased relevance is rooted in a broader and more inclusive definition of social listening:

Social and community listening is the process of gathering and analyzing readily available information from online, offline, and on-ground sources to derive community insights that inform evidence-based Social and Behavior Change (SBC) action.

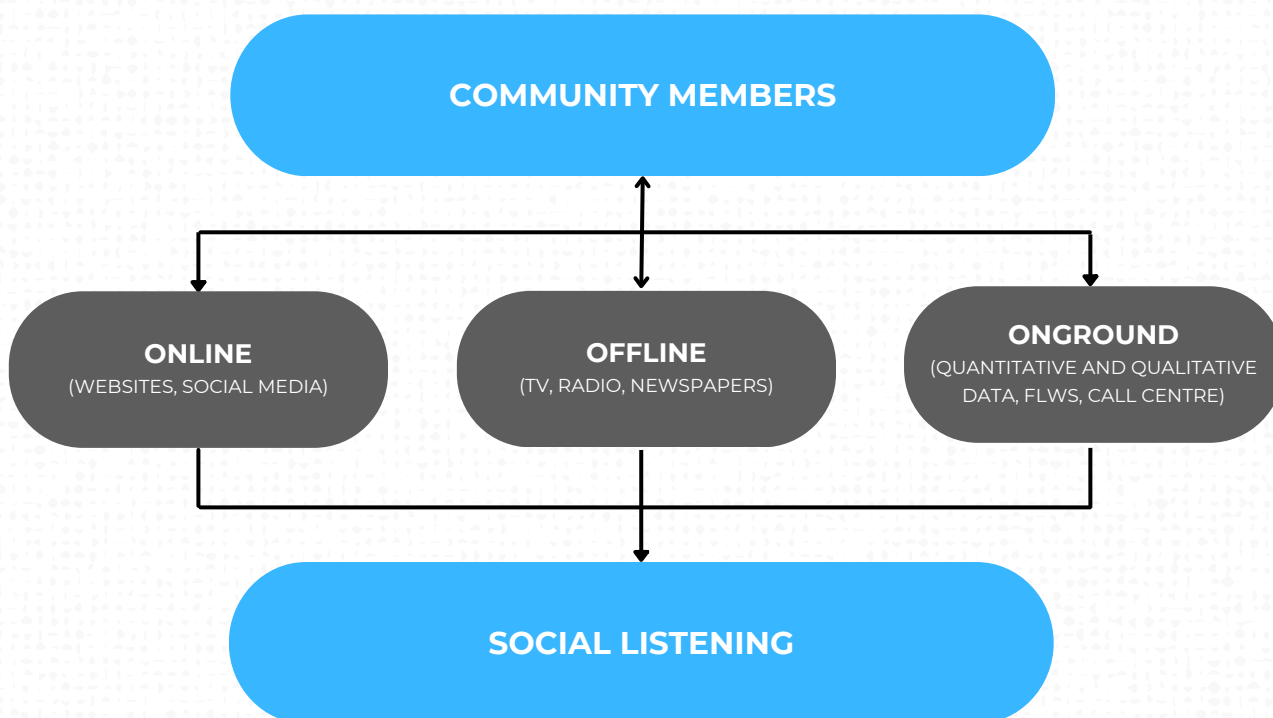
The scope of social listening transcends digital platforms, delving into offline spaces and on-ground interactions. Online listening encompasses all online platforms and social media, where conversations are fast-paced and dynamic. Offline listening incorporates traditional media channels such as television, radio, and newspapers, offering a more conventional but still critical perspective. Lastly, on-ground listening, which involves direct community interactions and surveys like SBC Qualitative and Quantitative Research, Community Rapid Assessments, Community Feedback Mechanisms, and Social Mobilization data, enables a direct, grassroots understanding of community sentiments and needs.

SBC Teams across ESAR are already engaging in aspects of social listening. Whether it's through social media monitoring, community feedback surveys, call centers for community interaction, or social mobilization data, each of these practices is a testament to the consequence of social listening in our data collection methods.

The rapid adoption of digital mediums in ESAR since the COVID-19 pandemic is especially visible among young people who make up majority of the population in most ESAR countries. We can integrate these community member voices with other existing SBC data sources to further refine and inform our programming.

It's important to recognize that in our interconnected information ecosystem, narratives do not remain confined to one medium. The transition from online to offline to on-ground happens rapidly and dynamically, making it essential to monitor all these spaces in tandem. This permeability of information underscores the importance of a holistic social listening approaches that can track narratives across various mediums.

FIGURE 1: INTEGRATED SOCIAL LISTENING



Finally, social listening plays a crucial role in addressing the systematic challenges caused by misinformation. Misinformation not only hampers the efficacy of SBC interventions but can also lead to adverse, sometimes deadly, outcomes for the communities we serve. Therefore, a proactive approach to identifying and counteracting misinformation is imperative. This is where social listening is a highly effective tool, providing the necessary tools to track misinformation narratives and inform our response strategies.

By focusing on the facets of social listening - from online, offline to on-ground - we can better inform our SBC actions, make evidence-based decisions, and foster a culture of responsiveness that keeps us connected to the communities we serve.

METHODOLOGY

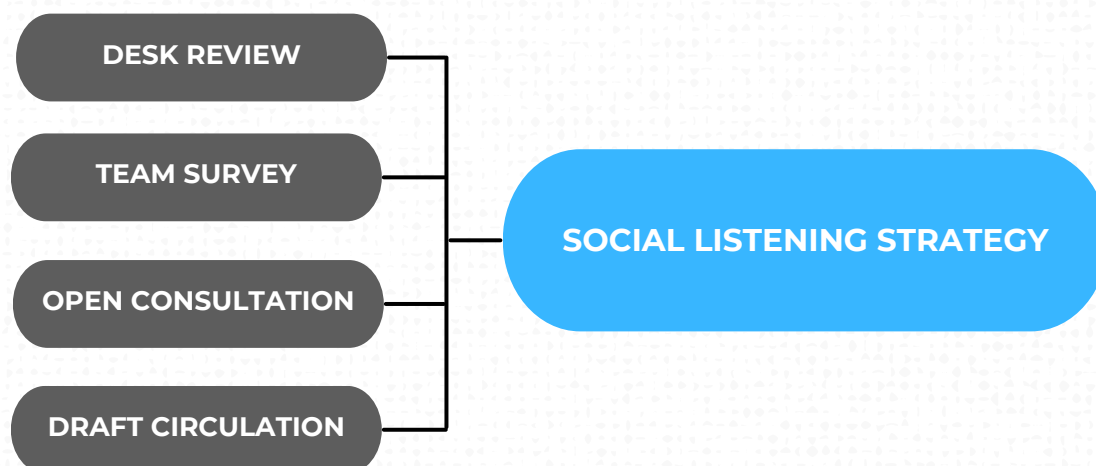
To ensure the effectiveness and relevance of this strategy, a thorough design process was undertaken that included review of interventions, a team survey, open consultation, and broad input.

The process initiated with the review of existing social listening interventions and best practices from UNICEF, UN, and private sector to collate knowledge and insights. This analysis included relevant research papers, presentations, and reports, allowing us to build upon proven methodologies and avoid potential pitfalls. These insights are credited across this document where applicable.

In parallel, we conducted a survey of Country Office (CO) SBC teams. This survey was

designed to establish a deeper understanding of the current implementation landscape, along with any associated challenges and opportunities. The responses we received provided us with visibility into on-ground realities, and the nuances that influence social listening in each location. The full results of this survey are included in annex section of this document.

FIGURE 2: STRATEGY INPUTS




The survey was followed up with an open consultation session, which included participants from UNICEF RO and CO SBC teams. The survey results were presented to the forum to explore their implications and outline a strategic framework informed by the survey, consultation, and review process. The input from the SBC teams during this consultation was instrumental in refining our approach and was incorporated into our strategic framework.

Finally, to ensure practicality and relevance of this strategy, a draft version of this document was shared with the RO and CO SBC teams. Their insights were essential to identify technical improvements and ensuring its alignment with operational realities. The broader team feedback is included in the final document, making this strategy a product of collective intelligence and collaborative effort.

INSIGHTS

The review, survey, and consultation process highlight a range of insights that underline the significance of social listening and the challenges it faces.

Every SBC team member surveyed asserted the critical role of social listening in understanding community needs and designing effective behavioural interventions. Yet, while SBC teams are actively engaged in social listening - 70% already conduct one or multiple forms of it - there are hurdles to overcome. Capacity building was identified as a significant barrier, with all respondents desiring more training on data analysis and interpretation. 80% also suggested training on tracking online conversations, managing misinformation, and translating insights into action.



100% of survey respondents believed that social listening can play a critical role in understanding community needs and sentiment



The process highlighted the value of social listening in the context of vaccination efforts. All respondents identified immunization as the top priority, followed by emergencies, reflecting the areas where teams believe social listening can make the most significant impact.

100% of survey respondents believe that social listening can play a critical role in understanding community needs and sentiment

This recognition is backed by substantial investment. An encouraging 70% of our surveyed teams reported having dedicated social listening resources in-country, with 90% leveraging digital forms for community feedback collection. However, the Regional Office (RO) Team flagged a crucial gap that while social listening is underway, its translation into tangible SBC actions on the ground and impact evaluation for it remains challenging.

We also confronted some prevalent perceptions about social listening. Some team members reflected their government counterparts' belief that social listening is not entirely representative, and only reflects a small subset of the population that has access to social media. This understanding points to the need for a more diversified social listening approach to better capture the diversity of our communities.

The desk review echoed this sentiment, illustrating that social listening often ends up as a one-way conversation, with communities sharing insights but lacking reciprocal engagement. It also highlighted that social listening can be a resource intensive undertaking required nuanced human analysis that needs to be carried out by individuals from within those cultural contexts.

A noteworthy insight during the discovery process was the existing Community Feedback Mechanism under the Collective Service, which is essentially performing integrated social listening functions. This realization further reinforced our broader definition of social listening, expanding its scope beyond just online or social media listening.

STAKEHOLDERS

For the successful execution of this social listening strategy, the collaboration and engagement of four key stakeholders are essential. These stakeholders are: UNICEF ESAR Regional Office SBC Team, UNICEF ESAR Country Office (CO) SBC Teams, Country Governments and In-Country Partners, and the Community Members.

At the heart of this strategy are the UNICEF RO and CO SBC Teams, encompassing the 21 countries in ESAR. They represent the primary stakeholders and custodians of this strategy. Their role goes beyond planning and execution; they are the pivotal connection between the strategy and the communities it serves. Their understanding and appreciation of the unique cultural and societal contexts within each country are vital in translating this strategy into meaningful action.

Simultaneously, Country Governments and Partners are crucial stakeholders. Their involvement ranges from strategy approval and implementation to review and outcome analysis. They provide resources, access, a unique perspective, and a deep understanding of the ground realities, enhancing the efficiency and impact of this strategy. Their contributions extend the reach of our initiatives and ensure that they align with the broader goals of public service and development within the country.

Finally, and most importantly, this strategy identifies Community Members as essential stakeholders. They are at the core of all SBC interventions, and social listening is no exception. The voices of community members provide the essential insights that inform and guide SBC efforts. They help identify prevailing concerns and information needs, which form the backbone of our strategies.

FIGURE 3: SOCIAL LISTENING STAKEHOLDERS



Recognizing and respecting the community's role as a stakeholder underscores our commitment to ensuring that social listening serves as a responsive, two-way dialogue, not just a one-way channel for data collection. Every engagement with communities is an opportunity to collect data, and every data collection endeavour is an opportunity to engage with the community. The separation of data collection and community engagement robs us of valuable time sensitive insights especially in emergencies. Our SBC teams can enable systematic capability for the concerns and information needs identified through social listening to receive timely responses and interventions, further reinforcing the value of community members as stakeholders.

CHALLENGES

Based on the insights, four key challenges have been identified that correspond to each of our primary stakeholders: the RO SBC Team, CO SBC Team, Government and Partners, and Community Members.

Starting with the RO SBC Team, one of the principal challenges identified is the difficulty in translating social listening activities into on-ground SBC action. Gathering insights is just one facet of social listening; the true value lies in utilizing these insights to inform and shape concrete behavioural interventions. Bridging the gap between insights and action poses a significant challenge and underscores the necessity for a clear roadmap that ensures the effective application of social listening outcomes.

For the CO SBC Teams, the challenge lies in the resource-intensive nature of social listening and the limited training. Social listening demands a considerable investment of time, personnel, effort, tools, and skills, as it involves intensive data collection and nuanced analysis. Without adequate training, CO SBC teams may struggle to fully leverage the potential of social listening, underlining the urgent need for capacity building in this area.

TABLE 1: CHALLENGES

STAKEHOLDER	CHALLENGE
RO SBC TEAM	Social listening activities often do not lead to on-ground SBC action.
CO SBC TEAM	Social listening is resource intensive, and we require more training for it.
GOVERNMENTS AND PARTNERS	Social listening picks up digital voices and is not representative of the country.
COMMUNITY MEMBERS	Social listening is a one-way conversation that does not provide any feedback

From the perspective of our Government and Partner stakeholders, the perceived limitation of social listening is its tendency to primarily capture digital voices, potentially creating a skewed representation of the country. This perception stems from the over representation of social listening data from digital platforms, raising concerns about the exclusion of voices that lack access to such platforms. Addressing this challenge requires a more inclusive and diversified approach to social listening data collection, ensuring that it captures a truly representative sample of the country's population.

Lastly, our Community Members face the challenge of social listening often being a one-way conversation. The community shares valuable insights but frequently does

Establish social listening as a core community insight tool that informs evidence-based Social and Behavior Change (SBC) action.



not receive responsive feedback or visible solutions. This situation may lead to community apathy or mistrust towards social listening initiatives, which can ultimately undermine SBC efforts. This challenge emphasizes the need for a more reciprocal dialogue, in which community concerns and needs identified through social listening are acknowledged and addressed. This challenge is not based on direct community observation or research. It has been inferred to reflect the need for ongoing SBC action.

OBJECTIVES

The overarching objective of this strategy is to:

Establish social listening as a core community insight tool that informs evidence-based Social and Behavior Change (SBC) action.

This primary objective is underpinned by a range of sub-objectives, each intended to address the unique challenges relevant to key stakeholders. Starting with the challenge faced by the RO SBC Team, where social listening activities often fail to

TABLE 2: SUCCESS PILLARS

STRATEGIC CORE		
Establish social listening as a core community insight tool that informs evidence-based Social and Behavior Change (SBC) action.		
STAKEHOLDER	CHALLENGE	SUCCESS PILLAR
RO SBC TEAM	Social listening activities often do not lead to on-ground SBC action.	Provide thought leadership to inspire action
CO SBC TEAMS	Social listening is resource intensive, and we require more training for it	Implement open-learning capacity building programs that improve resource efficiency
GOVERNMENTS AND PARTNERS	Social listening picks up digital voices and is not representative of the country	Share evidence and provide technical support to include offline and on-ground data
COMMUNITY MEMBERS	Social listening is a one-way conversation that does not provide any feedback	Develop feedback loops for meaningful conversation with the community

translate into on-ground SBC action, requires a crucial sub-objective: to provide thought leadership that inspires action. This objective emphasizes the importance of translating insights derived from social listening into actionable strategies.

The CO SBC Team highlighted a challenge rooted in the resource-intensive nature of social listening and a lack of relevant training. The sub-objective to address is to implement open-learning capacity building programs that can improve resource efficiency. Through continuous training and skill development, we can enhance the teams' proficiency in leveraging social listening tools effectively, thus increasing reducing the resource requirement.

Government and Partner stakeholders perceive social listening as potentially non-representative, primarily capturing digital voices. To overcome this, the sub-objective is to share evidence and provide technical support to include offline and on-ground data. This underscores our commitment to ensuring that social listening is representative, encompassing voices from all parts of society, irrespective of digital access or literacy.

Lastly, for Community Members, the challenge lies in social listening being perceived as a one-way conversation that lacks feedback. To address this, the sub-objective is to develop feedback loops for meaningful conversation with the community. This has the potential to transform social listening into an engine for interactive dialogue that not only listens but also contributes to the response capability.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The strategic framework below, consolidates the stakeholders, challenges, objectives, and success pillars; and serves as a synthesis of the overarching social listening strategy. This framework is specifically designed for ease of adoption and adaptability by country teams across ESAR.

The customization of this framework is strongly recommended as the starting point in formulating a country-level social listening strategy. This approach allows each country team to mold the framework in a manner that caters to their specific contexts, challenges, and goals, thereby ensuring a more locally relevant, effective approach to social listening.

Following its customization, the strategic framework can serve as the foundational structure upon which a more comprehensive strategy document is crafted. By leveraging the broader principles and findings of the regional strategy, the CO specific strategies can provide more detailed plans of action to inform social listening efforts within each country.

TABLE 3: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Stakeholder	RO SBC Team	CO SBC Teams	Government and Partners	Community Members
Challenge	Social listening activities often do not lead to on-ground SBC action.	Social listening is resource intensive, and we require more training for it	Social listening only picks up digital voices and is not representative of the country	Social listening is a one-way conversation that does not provide any feedback
Strategic Core	<i>Establish social listening as a core community insight tool under SBC that informs behavioral strategies and misinformation management</i>			
Success Pillar	Provide thought leadership to inspire action	Implement open-learning capacity building programs	Share evidence and provide proactive technical support	Develop feedback loops for meaningful conversation with the community
Action	Social Listening for Behavioral Action Field Guide (Best Practices and Lessons) Bi-Monthly Social Listening Trends Report Quarterly Program Specific Insights Report Social Listening Report Update (from 'listening' to 'insights') Digital Strategy Input	Social Listening Technical Training CO Specific Social Listening Dashboards Monthly Social Listening Reports Webinar on social listening for Misinformation Management Misinformation Management Checklist	Offline Social Listening Implementation Toolkit Technical Support for Integrated Social Listening for Disease Outbreaks Webinar on integrated social listening ESAR Social Listening Conference	'Verified' Content Hub for Media and Public (text and video Q&A) Youth Dialogue Session on Misinformation Community Dialogue Session on Misinformation Misinformation Awareness Video

ACTION

In order to achieve the strategy's objectives and address the identified challenges, a series of targeted actions have been developed for each stakeholder group. The actions are also part of the Strategic Framework and have been elaborated here for greater clarity.

The actions for the Regional Office (RO) SBC Team, Country Office (CO) SBC Teams, Government and Partners, and Community Members are designed to strengthen social listening capacities, enhance the use of community insights, improve misinformation management, and foster a more meaningful dialogue with the community.

RO SBC Team

- **Social Listening for Behavioral Action Field Guide:** A practical guide detailing how the best practices and insights from social listening can be translated into behavioral action.
- **Bi-Monthly Social Listening Trends Report:** A summary of key narratives identified from social listening activities, providing an overview of the evolving communication landscape.
- **Quarterly Program Specific Insights Report:** In-depth insights relevant for specific programs, such as 'Second Decade' or 'Education', derived from integrated social listening.
- **Social Listening Report Update:** On-going enhancement of monthly social listening monthly reports, based on evaluation, to provide more actionable insights.
- **Digital Strategy Connection:** Partner with External Communications and Digital teams to integrate social listening as a data source in regional and country level digital strategies.

CO SBC Teams

- **Social Listening Technical Training:** A full day technical training for Country Office (CO) social listening personnel or teams, focusing on data analysis and detailing effective use of tools and techniques for resource efficiency.
- **CO Specific Social Listening Dashboards:** Developing open access social listening dashboards tailored to the context of each CO, providing ready access to results and limiting demands on social listening teams.
- **Monthly Social Listening Reports:** Provide on-going monthly reports to COs outlining regional and country level insights, facilitating in-country social listening activities and freeing up local social listening resources.
- **Webinar on Social Listening for Misinformation Management:** An open webinar focused on leveraging social listening for effective misinformation management, a top priority for SBC teams.
- **Misinformation Management Checklist:** Developing and deploying a checklist to guide steps required for effective misinformation management based on social listening.

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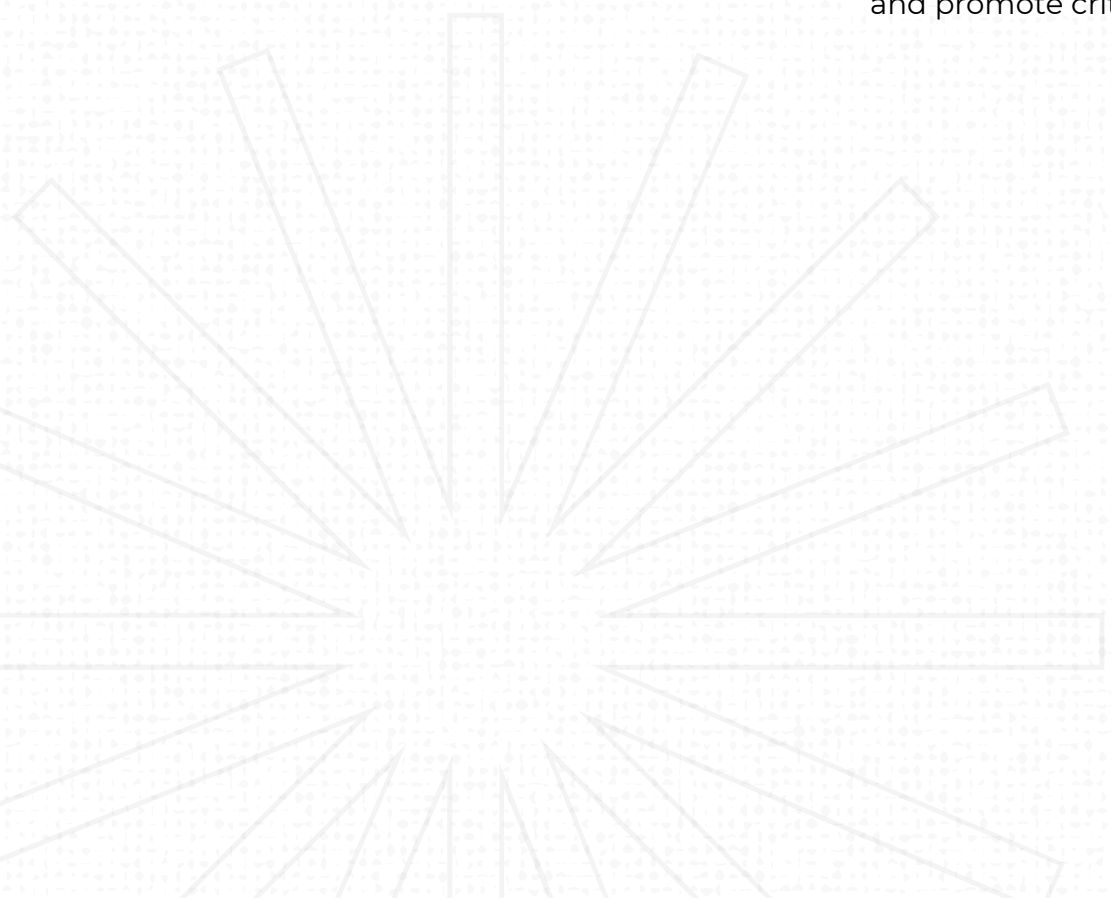


Government and Partners

- **Offline Social Listening Implementation Toolkit:** A practical toolkit providing guidelines for implementing offline social listening, helping to bridge the digital divide.
- **Technical Support for Integrated Social Listening for Disease Outbreaks:** A pilot with 4-5 priority countries to strengthen or facilitate integrated social listening during disease outbreaks, enhancing responsiveness and effectiveness.
- **Webinar on Integrated Social Listening: Organizing a webinar to disseminate knowledge and expertise on integrated social listening, geared towards EPI, MOH, and local partners.**
- **ESAR Social Listening Conference:** Hosting an annual virtual conference to foster collaboration, share experiences, and discuss the future of social listening in ESAR. This could be implemented as a subset of a larger regional gathering such as the SBC Network Meeting.

Community Members

- **'Verified' Content Hub:** A content hub, ideally on official government websites, offering verified information in the form of text and video Q&As, with the goal to combat misinformation and provide easy access to trusted information.
- **Youth Dialogue Session on Misinformation:** A template for conducting a social listening, information gap addressing, and misinformation resilience dialogue session with young people empowering them to discern reliable information.
- **Community Dialogue Session on Misinformation:** A template for organizing a community dialogue session to identify concerns, provide answers, and build misinformation recognition capability..
- **Misinformation Awareness Video:** A template video to raise awareness about misinformation, highlight trusted sources of information, publicize channels to ask questions, and promote critical thinking.



TIMELINE

TABLE 4: PLANNED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

STAKEHOLDER	SUCCESS PILLAR	ACTIVITY	TIMELINE
RO SBC Team	Provide thought leadership to inspire action	Social Listening for Behavioural Action Field Guide	Q3 2023
		Bi-Monthly Social Listening Trends Report	Ongoing
		Quarterly Program Specific Insights Report	Ongoing
		Social Listening Report Update	Ongoing
		Digital Strategy Connection	Q3 2023
CO SBC Teams	Implement open-learning capacity building programs that improve resource efficiency	Social Listening Technical Training	Q4 2023
		CO Specific Social Listening Dashboards	Q4 2023
		Monthly Social Listening Reports	Ongoing
		Webinar - Social Listening for Misinformation Management	Q3 2023
		Misinformation Management Checklist	Q4 2023
Government and Partners	Share evidence and provide technical support to include offline and on-ground data	Offline Social Listening Implementation Toolkit	Q2 2024
		Technical Support / Virtual Orientation for Integrated Social Listening for Disease Outbreaks	Q1 2024
		Webinar - Integrated Social Listening	Q3 2023
		ESAR Social Listening Conference	Q2 2024
Community Members	Develop feedback loops for meaningful conversation with the community	Verified' - Content Hub	Q2 2024
		Youth Dialogue Session on Misinformation	Q3 2024
		Community Dialogue Session on Misinformation	Q3 2024
		Misinformation Awareness Video	Q3 2024

DATA SOURCES AND TOOLS

In order to effectively implement social listening across the region, a diverse mix of online and offline tools and platforms have been chosen. These tools have been selected based on their easy availability within UNICEF and their proven effectiveness in tracking and analyzing relevant discussions and trends.

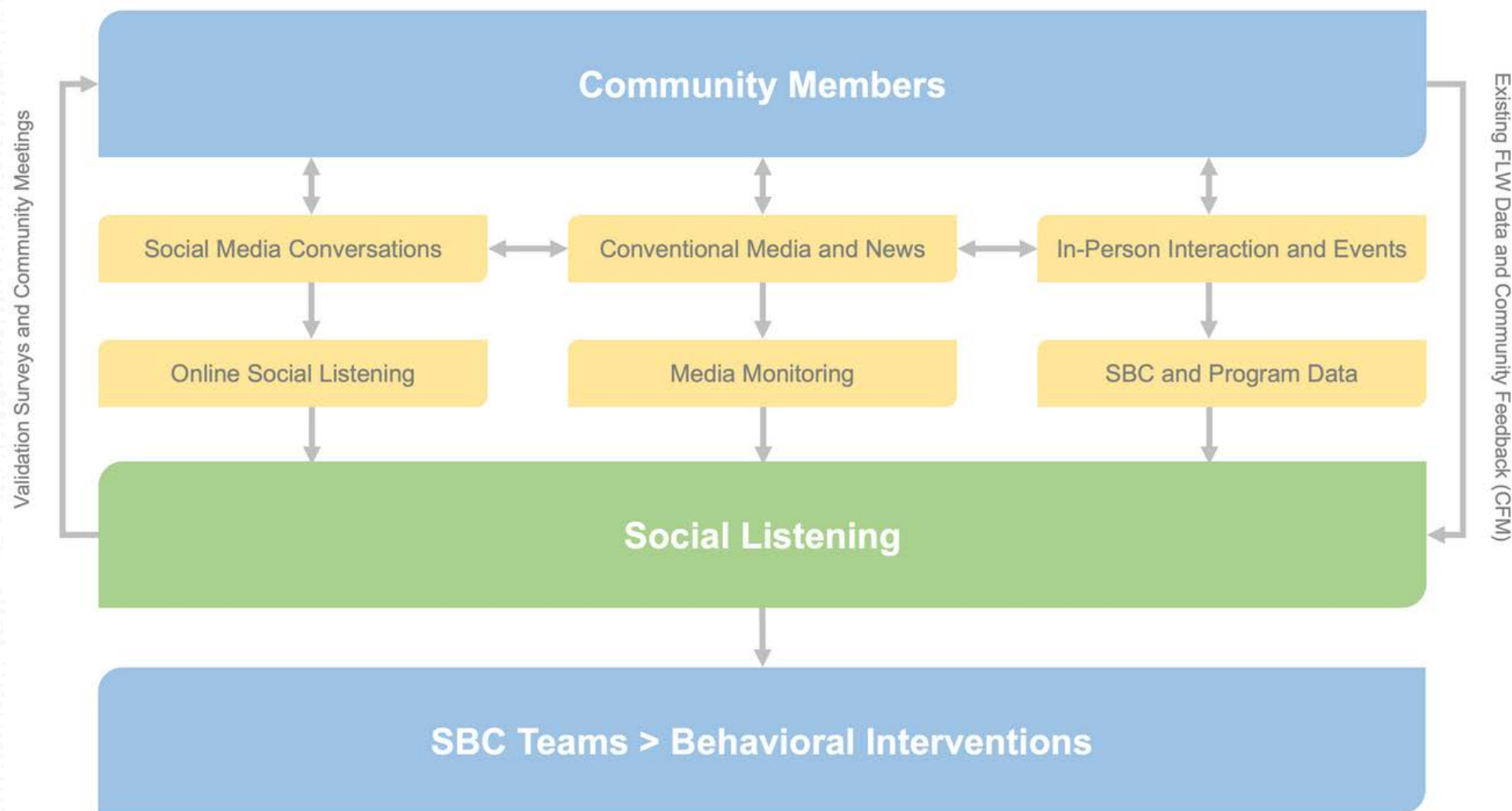
Online social listening aims to generate insights from digital and social media primarily through Talkwalker, CrowdTangle, Google Trends, and Google Alerts. Here's a brief overview of each:

- **Talkwalker:** This is a robust social listening platform that specializes in tracking and consolidating results across various media types based on specific queries. An existing global LTA with Talkwalker within UNICEF simplifies its accessibility for regional and country teams. Talkwalker's key strengths lie in its advanced filtering capabilities, data export options, and data consolidation.
- **CrowdTangle:** CrowdTangle, a tool from Meta, is adept at analyzing and reporting on social media trends. It boasts superior performance in capturing content from Facebook and Instagram compared to Talkwalker. However, it's worth noting that Meta has reportedly halted further development of this tool, leaving its future uncertain.
- **Google Trends:** This tool provides insights into trending topics or search queries in Google Search across different regions and languages. This feature is particularly valuable for understanding current public interests and concerns.
- **Google Alerts:** As a content change detection and notification service, Google Alerts sends users email notifications when it discovers new content - like web pages, newspaper articles, or blogs - that matches a specified search term. This tool is particularly useful for tracking specific topics or mentions of an organization.

Offline social listening tracks conventional media reporting and sentiment primarily through media monitoring reports. As identified in the SBC Team survey, about 70% of respondents already have access to country level media monitoring which can inform local and regional social listening. These reports track relevant stories in newspapers, television, and radio broadcasts and may encompass content from national, local, and community-level media outlets. In addition to media monitoring, journalist meetups or surveys, press club partnerships, and media dialogue forums could be powerful supporting tools. It's important to note that the breadth of offline social listening is constrained by the media outlets tracked and the input from data collection teams.

On-ground social listening leverages a range of primary or secondary research and fieldwork data to identify actionable community level insights. These sources can include Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) data, Front Line Worker (FLW) data, Social Mobilization data, campaign data, Community Feedback Mechanism data, Call Center data, and EPI or MOH data. Integrating social and community listening elements into current or forthcoming partnerships, programme implementations,

FIGURE 4: SOCIAL LISTENING ARCHITECTURE



and programme documents, as well as through youth networks, could significantly enhance the generation of direct-from-community insights and evidence. This collection of data sources provides valuable insights into community behaviours, attitudes, and experiences. However, the success of on-ground social listening is largely dependent on the social listening team's awareness of these data sources and the SBC teams' assistance in accessing them.

A partnership approach to field level data collection can improve access to on-ground narratives. For example, a shared ODK or KOBO form for UNICEF, government, and CSO personnel to report community sentiment during field visits helps all programs and partners. This does not require any additional funding or training since the cost to use these platforms are free for UN agencies and most COs are already using such forms. By reducing operational friction and opening access, social listening and SBC personnel can over time develop a richer data stream from the field.

Although these platforms and tools offer many benefits, they also come with certain limitations, primarily that social listening can only access information that is publicly available. Thus, user privacy controls restrict access to platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Additionally, the effectiveness of social listening is reliant on the accuracy of the queries and keywords used for tracking conversations.

To mitigate these challenges, SBC teams are poised to play an instrumental role in supporting social listening teams by facilitating access to on-ground data sources. Social listening is projected to become a significant source of insights for SBC teams, culminating in the development of Social Listening Insights reports that include 'Opportunities to Act' recommendations.

To ensure that stakeholders are equipped to effectively utilize these platforms and tools, a comprehensive training and capacity building program forms part of this strategy. Although there won't be ongoing evaluation of these platforms and tools due to their already established reliability and accessibility within UNICEF, the effectiveness of the overall social listening strategy will be assessed based on its influence on SBC actions and outcomes.

TOPICS AND THEMES

UNICEF's programmatic focus encompasses a wide range of issues centered around improving and protecting children's lives. Key areas include learning and skills for all children and adolescents, climate resilience adaptation and children, health, nutrition, child protection, water, sanitation, and hygiene. Within these domains, social listening can serve as a powerful tool to glean insights and guide strategic decisions.

Social listening, as revealed by the SBC Team survey, already plays a significant role in tracking discussions and sentiments around COVID-19, vaccines, and routine immunization. These topics have been universally recognized by the respondents as current priorities.

Beyond these central areas, there is also considerable interest in employing social listening for tracking disease outbreaks and emergencies, as evidenced by 70% of

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survey respondents. SBC's active role in emergency response underscores the importance of this focus. Additionally, child protection issues are a priority for half of the respondents, reflecting UNICEF's ongoing commitment to advocating for children's rights and safety.

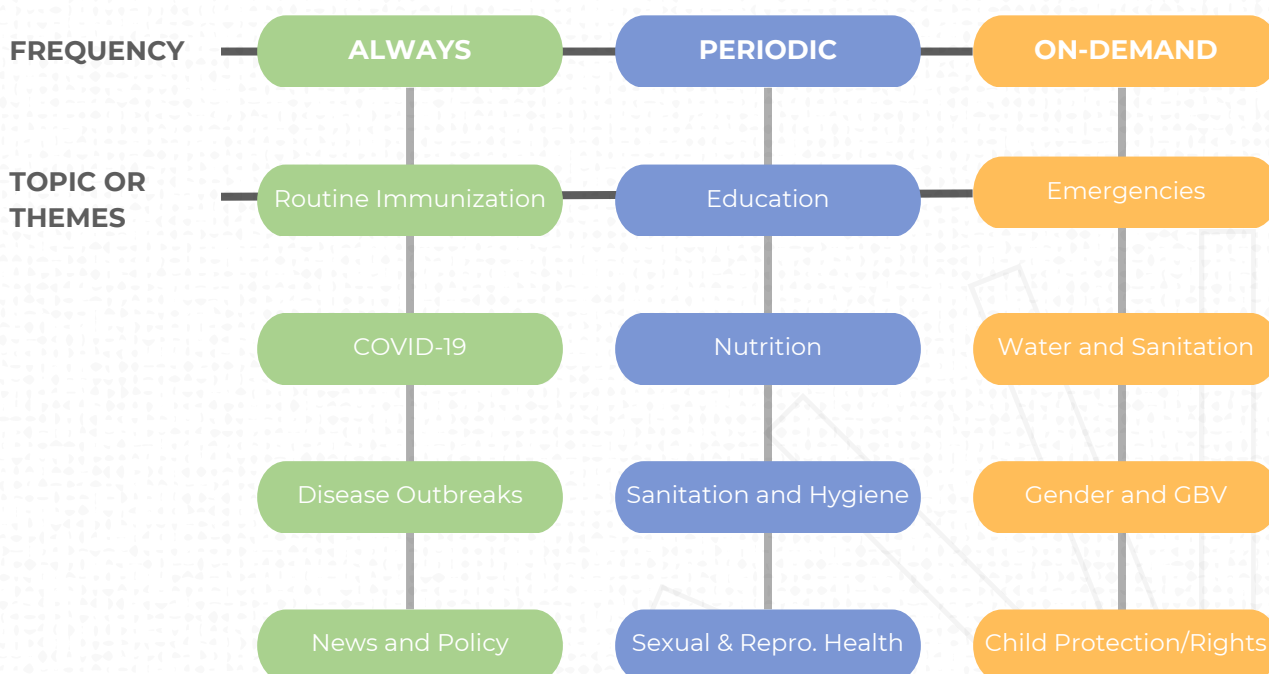
While these themes are high-priority, the scope of social listening at UNICEF is not limited to them. Social listening tools and teams are equipped to support a broader range of programmatic areas, including nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, and others, aligning with evolving programmatic responses and mission.

However, deploying social listening broadly comes with its challenges. Certain topics, such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), might not generate ample conversation or data, making analysis difficult. On the other hand, areas with a high volume of discourse, like the COVID-19 vaccine, can pose challenges in identifying key insights amidst the noise.

The insights from social listening are incorporated into monthly reports, providing a regular overview of public sentiment and discussions on key issues. Additionally, the team will conduct in-depth analysis and reports on select priorities such as Education and the Second Decade, focusing on comprehensive exploration of these areas.

In order to address the resource challenge and better target social listening efforts the following core topics and frequency of their tracking is proposed:

FIGURE 5: TOPICS AND FREQUENCY OF MONITORING



The above is not an exhaustive list and other programs and priorities can be incorporated as and when required. The goal for this prioritization is to ensure that the most essential SBC priorities are receiving actionable insights they require, and social listening teams are able to delve deeper into high volume conversations that reflect greater community interest.

TRANSLATING LISTENING INTO ACTION

The process of turning social listening insights into impactful SBC action necessitates strategic planning and precision. The abundance of data generated from social listening activities can be overwhelming. Therefore, social listening analysts need to direct their focus on extracting specific insights that can be acted upon.

The first step in this process lies in formulating precise behavioral questions. Such questions are ideally developed by the SBC teams, either independently or in collaboration with social listening teams. The art of asking the right questions revolves around identifying a specific community group, pinpointing a location, setting a timeframe, recognizing a program or intervention, and specifying a behavioral action.

For instance, a well-crafted question might be: "Do the young people aged 15-25 in Nairobi demonstrate a willingness to receive the HPV vaccine, based on data from the past three months?" This question is clear, focused, and designed to yield insights that can guide specific actions. In contrast, an improperly formed question such as: "What is the general acceptance of the HPV vaccine in Kenya?" is too broad and vague, resulting in a vast array of data that is practically impossible to analyze. The task is further complicated when it involves interpreting offline and on-ground data.

In cases where the SBC teams or partners require further validation of a given social listening insight, supplemental measures can be adopted. These might include rapid community dialogue sessions, online surveys, or outbound call centre calls. Such validation exercises can help boost confidence in the insights obtained and underscore the necessity of responding to them.

It is crucial that social listening teams are kept informed about ongoing interventions and the data these actions generate. This visibility ensures that social listening teams can effectively track the impact of interventions initiated from insights. This ongoing monitoring and evaluation is the cornerstone of a successful social listening strategy.

The inclusion of 'Opportunities to Act' insights in all social listening reports offers a proactive approach towards encouraging SBC action at the CO level. By identifying potential areas for intervention, this feature directly bridges the gap between collected data and actionable insights. With clear, concrete opportunities identified, teams can readily transform social listening insights into on-ground actions, making social listening reports not just informative, but inherently action-oriented.

Several actions planned as a result of this strategy will further support SBC teams in developing evidence-based interventions based on social listening. A notable example is the Social Listening for Behavioral Action Field Guide, planned for Q3 2023. Utilizing UNICEF's Behavioral Drivers Model, this guide will provide a structured approach to analyzing social listening data and turning these insights into effective behavior change strategies. The user-friendly guide will help CO SBC Teams with designing interventions that are tailored to the real issues that underpin community sentiment, ultimately making SBC interventions more impactful

FIGURE 6: MOVING FROM LISTENING TO ACTION



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is vital for ensuring the successful execution and assessment of this strategy. The M&E approach for this strategy recognizes that social listening is primarily an upstream data provider, which may not always have direct visibility of the downstream impacts of its activities.

As such, the focus of our M&E efforts will largely be on process indicators, as opposed to impact indicators. Process indicators allow us to monitor and measure the execution of the major actions proposed in the strategy. They facilitate understanding of whether the actions are carried out as intended, providing a window into the operational side of the strategy.

Examples of process indicators include the frequency and timeliness of report generation by RO and CO SBC teams, the number of capacity-building programs implemented, and the level of engagement with community dialogue sessions, among others.

While measuring the immediate impact of social listening, such as 'the number of interventions informed by social listening insights', is not always possible, the process indicators will provide valuable data that can support the implementation of such impact-level indicators.

TABLE 5: MONITORING INDICATORS

ACTIVITY	INDICATOR
Social Listening for Behavioural Action Field Guide	No. of CO level social listening strategies
Bi-Monthly Social Listening Trends Report	No. of reports delivered
Quarterly Program Specific Insights Report	No. of reports delivered
Social Listening Report Update	No. of reports delivered
Digital Strategy Connection	No. of posts based on social listening insights
Social Listening Technical Training	No. of people trained
CO Specific Social Listening Dashboards	No. of dashboards delivered
Monthly Social Listening Reports	No. of reports delivered
Webinar - Social Listening for Misinformation Management	No. of participants
Misinformation Management Checklist	No. of countries implementing
Offline Social Listening Implementation Toolkit	No. of countries implementing

While social listening is a powerful tool for gauging public sentiment, it also involves collecting and analyzing data from individuals, often without their explicit knowledge or consent.



ACTIVITY	INDICATOR
Technical Support for Integrated Social Listening for Disease Outbreaks	No. of participants
Webinar - Integrated Social Listening	No. of participants
ESAR Social Listening Conference	No. of participants
'Verified' Video Series	No. of videos developed
Verified' - Content Hub	No. of people reached
Youth Dialogue Session on Misinformation	No. of sessions conducted
Community Dialogue Session on Misinformation	No. of sessions conducted
Misinformation Awareness Video	No. of people reached
Outcome Indicator	No. of opportunities to act recommended
Outcome Indicator	No. of recommendations actioned by COs

RISKS AND LIMITATIONS

While implementing this strategy, it is crucial to acknowledge potential risks and limitations that might arise, as they could significantly impact the success of the strategic outcomes and planned actions.

The first major risk lies in the nature of social listening itself. Given that majority of social listening data is collected from digital platforms, it inevitably has lesser visibility on segments of the population without access to these channels. This limitation could result in insights that are not entirely representative of the broader community's attitudes and needs, especially in areas where digital access is limited. This is why this strategy insists on complementing online social listening with offline and on-ground data sources to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of community sentiments.

Secondly, the strategy hinges heavily on the capacity of SBC teams to interpret and act upon the insights generated through social listening. If the teams lack the necessary resources to perform this task efficiently, the overall effectiveness of the strategy could be compromised. To mitigate this risk, it's imperative to invest in regular training and capacity-building initiatives, ensuring that the teams are well-equipped to translate insights into action. The planned Social Listening for Behavioral Action Field Guide is aimed at addressing this challenge. Another recommendation is to train country level social listening personnel, that can support in developing local insights and supporting SBC teams with implementation.

Additionally, the strategy is contingent on active participation and cooperation from various stakeholders, including government entities and partners. Any reluctance or resistance from these stakeholders could pose a significant challenge to the successful implementation of the strategy. It's crucial, therefore, to maintain open lines of communication and foster strong collaborative relationships with all stakeholders, especially relevant government ministries.

Another potential risk involves data privacy and ethical considerations. While social listening is a powerful tool for gauging public sentiment, it also involves collecting and analyzing data from individuals, often without their explicit knowledge or consent. This raises important ethical questions and could potentially lead to breaches of privacy if not handled carefully.

While social listening is a powerful tool for gauging public sentiment, it also involves collecting and analyzing data from individuals, often without their explicit knowledge or consent.

This could also pose as a reputational risk for UNICEF. To address this concern, strict adherence to privacy laws and ethical guidelines should be a priority, and transparency should be maintained about the data collection and usage process. One of the key steps the Social Listening reports and training programs will undertake is to anonymize the collected data, attributable to individuals only, in all reports, internal and external.

Lastly, the fluidity and fast-paced nature of digital media conversations, disease outbreaks, and emergencies, present a unique challenge. Social listening requires constant vigilance to keep up with these rapid changes and to avoid drawing conclusions based on outdated or irrelevant data. This necessitates a robust, dynamic system for social listening that can adapt quickly to these changes. The strategy aims to address this risk through close collaboration with stakeholders and through constant monitoring of UNICEF's priorities in the region.

ROLES AND RESOURCES

The effective execution of this strategy rests on the resources available and the distribution of responsibilities among key stakeholders.

The Social Listening consultant within the ESAR SBC team takes the primary role in implementing this strategy. However, given the long-term nature of the strategy, there may be misalignment between the consultant's tenure and the strategy's timeline. This challenge necessitates careful planning to ensure smooth transitions and consistency in the strategy's implementation, regardless of personnel changes.

Country Office (CO) SBC Teams are instrumental in supporting the implementation. Their participation in implementing capacity-building activities, as well as providing valuable insights and feedback on actions and outputs generated from this strategy, are crucial for the successful rollout in their respective offices.

When it comes to financial resources, the majority of the strategy's implementation does not demand significant funding. A large part of the capacity-building initiatives will be implemented remotely, and existing ESAR contracts, such as those with Talkwalker and consultants, can support the majority of the output generation.

However, some funding will be required for creating a content hub and producing video content, integral components of successful social listening outcomes. To minimize these costs, partnerships could be formed with organizations like the Africa Infodemic Response Alliance (AIRA) or with COs possessing available funds for content creation.

CONTEXTUALIZATION

While this strategy is designed with a regional focus for ESAR, it is vital to understand that each Country Office (CO) has unique circumstances and realities. The ability to adapt this overarching strategy to their specific contexts is paramount to its success. Here's how CO SBC Teams can effectively contextualize this strategy:

Customize the Strategic Framework: The strategic framework presented in this strategy is intentionally simplified to be easily adaptable. Each CO can customize this framework according to their own needs, considering their unique challenges and stakeholders. CO SBC Teams may conduct a local workshop in partnership with the RO team to localize the framework.

Conduct Information Landscape Analysis: The information landscape varies from country to country and city to city. CO Teams may conduct a review of current information consumption trends in the communities they work with. This will have immediate impact on the social listening strategy.

Collaborate with Local Partners: Collaboration with local government and partners is crucial for getting a broader picture and ensuring that insights captured through social listening are representative. Social listening is not a one person, or one organization job and all stakeholders can play a role. They can provide additional offline and on-ground data which is vital to balance the digital-only voices.

Leverage existing resources: Maximizing use of already available local resources could ensure a more sustainable approach to social listening. These resources may include UNICEF Communication, Advocacy and Partnership (CAP) section's media monitoring, data from Ministry/Ministries of Information or Broadcasting, planned assessments for emergencies and development, and data or outputs from Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Collective Service.

Adapt Actions and Timeline: Not all actions may be relevant or feasible for all countries. CO SBC Teams should evaluate each action's applicability and adjust the timelines based on local realities and capabilities.

Localize Content: Content for feedback loops and community engagement should be created in local languages and take into consideration cultural sensitivities. This

relevance could resonate more with local community and improve engagement. RO strategy will result in templates that can speed up development of local content.

Monitor and Evaluate Based on Local Indicators: Monitoring and evaluation should be adapted based on local indicators and targets that reflect the CO's unique situation and objectives. This can be arrived at after the strategic framework has been localized.

The purpose of this strategy is to guide and not dictate. The power of social listening lies in its ability to provide context-specific insights. In the same way, this strategy's application should reflect and adapt to the context it is being employed in, ensuring the most significant potential impact on the ground.

NEXT STEPS

The successful implementation and subsequent impact of this social listening strategy rely not only on the execution of the proposed actions but also on continuous assessment and adaptation. Here are the next steps to move this strategy forward:

Pilot Implementation: Partner with 4-5 COs to create a proof of concept and support implementation of this strategy. The partnership could be around specific subjects or topics that are relevant to the local contexts.

Immediate Commencement: The strategy's outlined actions, resources, and responsibilities will be initiated immediately. Each stakeholder, from the Social Listening consultant to CO SBC Teams, may begin their respective tasks as described in the strategy once the strategy is formally approved.

Stakeholder Engagement: Continual engagement and communication with all stakeholders will be maintained to ensure everyone is aligned with the strategy's objectives and the actions required to achieve them. This can be accomplished through updates in the Monthly Social Listening report.

Content Creation and Partnerships: Initiatives for establishing partnerships for content creation and setting up the content hub can begin once a concept note for them has been finalized. This will help facilitate anticipated social listening outcomes.

Regular Monitoring and Evaluation: It is crucial to continuously monitor and evaluate the strategy's effectiveness and impact. This includes tracking the process indicators as described in the Monitoring and Evaluation section of the strategy. The RO Social Listening consultant will track and circulate results.

Annual Reviews: The strategy and its implementation will be reviewed on an annual basis. These reviews will consider changes in the landscape, new insights, the success of the implemented actions, and stakeholder feedback. The strategy will then be updated and adapted as necessary to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

Addressing Gaps and Challenges: The Risks and limitations section has identified potential challenges that may affect implementation. These challenges will be kept visible to all stakeholders. This transparency will help to mitigate any adverse impacts.

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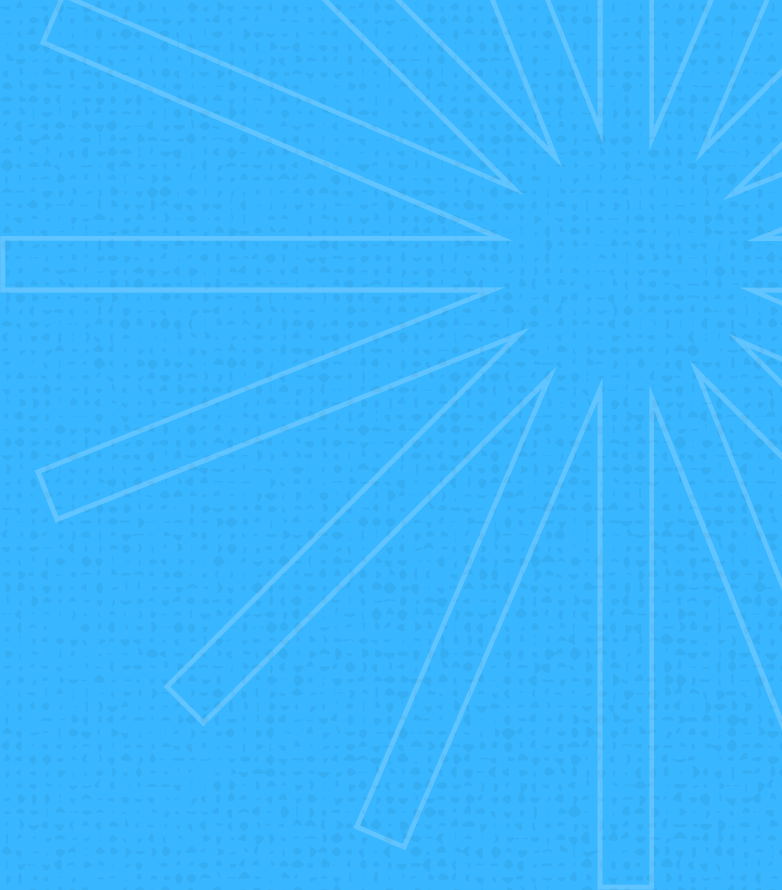
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