

Guide to CARD-F to use Twitter



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INTRODUCTION

The social networking site Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com>) provides a free, easy way for the CARD-F staff to disseminate information about the initiatives work quickly to any individual or institution anywhere. CARD-F messages sent via Twitter could be accessed by a traditional computer and web browser, by a smart phone, or by a basic cell phone with only texting capabilities. CARD-F messages on Twitter, called tweets, can be posted automatically to the CARD-F web site as well, allowing staff to update the web site easily.

Twitter is used by staff members of many international donors that are funding various initiatives in Afghanistan, as well as many press representatives working for local or international media.

The following is a strategy by Jayne Cravens to get CARD-F using Twitter as quickly as possible, and to ensure effective use of the service to reach various constituencies.

GETTING STARTED

1. _____

To get started on Twitter, create an account. Here is my recommendation for what CARD-F should write in its profile on Twitter:

Name: CARD-F Afghanistan

User Name: CARD-F

Location: Kabul, Afghanistan

Web: <http://www.cardf.gov.af>

email: info@cardf.gov.af

Bio:

Sustained Reduction of Poppy Cultivation in Afghanistan. Working to empower Afghan farmers & cooperatives. Focused on agriculture & rural development to ensure economic prosperity.

Why I think this bio is best: it fits the 160 character limit on Twitter, and it uses keywords that journalists and other stakeholders may use to find out what is happening in Afghanistan that would lead them to CARD-F's work.

2.

The CARD-F Twitter account needs to follow these Afghanistan-related Twitter feeds (do a "search" to find them, then click "follow"). You will be following around 200 people to start:

@ISAFmedia

@USAIDAfghan

@Afghans4Tomorro

@DrMobarez

@Pshamal

@fragilestates

@DFID_UK

@AfghanMissionUN

@AfghanAdvisor

@sharifsahak

@USEmbassyKabul

@unafghanistan

Follow everyone @Pshamal is following
<http://twitter.com/#!/Pshamal/following>

Follow any media reps or Afghan based folks that ISAFMedia follows:
<http://twitter.com/#!/ISAFmedia/following>

Follow any media reps or Afghan-based people that are followed by this person:
<https://twitter.com/#!/DixieMarilee/following>

The CARD-F Twitter account should not follow film stars, singers, or others whose work has nothing to do with the focus of CARD-F. Remember that any Twitter user can see what Twitter accounts the CARD-F account follows; the information is not confidential.

More about who not to follow is discussed on the last page of this guidance document.

3.

Once you have clicked "follow" on everyone, wait at least 24 hours - or even two weeks - reading other people's postings. This will give you time to understand more about how Twitter works. But even if you are not posting, you should check Twitter every day (twice a day is best).

When you feel ready, post CARD-F's first tweet. You may use only 120 characters or less.

The best day for you to start tweeting is Sunday. Days that are not great to tweet: Friday or Saturday (very low readership those days). If you have breaking news on Friday or Saturday, you may want to repeat those same Tweets on Sunday.

DAY 1 OF TWEETING

Here is my suggestion for your first tweet, which you should do in the morning:

CARD-F will start tweeting soon re: our work towards Sustained Reduction of Poppy Cultivation in #Afghanistan. More soon.

Here is my suggestion for your second tweet, to post 2 - 4 hours after your first tweet:

CARD-F will start tweeting soon re: our work towards Sustained Reduction of Poppy Cultivation in #Afghanistan. More soon.

DAY 2 OF TWEETING

Morning tweet:

We are working to empower #Afghan #farmers & cooperatives. We will start tweeting soon re: our work in #Afghanistan.

Again in the afternoon:

We are working to empower #Afghan #farmers & cooperatives. We will start tweeting soon re: our work in #Afghanistan.

DAY 3 OF TWEETING

Morning tweet:

CARD-F: focused on #agriculture & #rural development to ensure economic prosperity in #Afghanistan. Will start tweeting re: our work soon.

Afternoon tweet:

CARD-F: focused on #agriculture & #rural development to ensure economic prosperity in #Afghanistan. Will start tweeting re: our work soon.

DAY 4 OF TWEETING

Morning tweet:

Will start tweeting soon re: our work to help #Afghan #farmers. In the meantime, please see our web site: <http://www.cardf.gov.af>

Afternoon tweet:

Will start tweeting soon re: our work to help #Afghan #farmers. In the meantime, please see our web site: <http://www.cardf.gov.af>

Why the same tweets in the morning and the afternoon? Because in the morning, you will be reaching people in Asia, Afghanistan and Europe, primarily; in the afternoon, you will be reaching North America primarily.

Why say #Afghan instead of just Afghan? This is called a *tag*. What a tag is and how to use it is discussed in section 5.

After these four days of Tweeting, you will be ready to start sending messages that are updates about CARD-F's work.

4.

Put a link to your twitter feed on the home page of the CARD-F web site. Even better: create a feed that will appear on the home page so that your last four tweets always appear on the CARD-F web site. Your web master can find out how to do this by going to:

settings > Twitter basics > Linking to your blog or website

START CARD-F ANNOUNCEMENTS

After doing the above four steps, CARD-F is now ready to start tweeting new topics.

What to tweet about:

- New reports posted to the CARD-F web site
- Upcoming press conferences
- Field visits ("Staff just conducted field visit to Kandahar. Great progress on #agriculture alternatives to poppy")
- New photos available on Flickr from CARD-F
- New videos available on your YouTube channel
- New funding

Watch your Twitter feed and read how others deliver their messages, to learn how to best communicate.

TAGS TO USE

tags to use when CARD-F posts to Twitter:

#Afghanistan
#agriculture
#Afghan
#farmers

This will help you reach more people.

Inappropriate tag: *#poppies*, because this is regarding the paper poppies worn by the British to remember WWI.

RESPOND QUICKLY

Respond promptly to anyone who writes to CARD-F via Twitter. People may write CARD-F in a public manner, where everyone can see their question, or directly to CARD-F (via "messages" on Twitter).

Four Tips for Avoiding bad PR on Twitter:

CARD-F should never post something political. To say, "Good luck to everyone voting tomorrow" is good. "Vote for so-and-so" is never appropriate.

Do not post personal tweets ("I just got a hair cut" or "here are photos from my vacation in India!"), but you can post off-topic posts that are appropriate to show your love for Afghanistan, such as "Congrats to the Afghan cricket team for their performance yesterday."

Do not follow anyone on Twitter via the CARD-F Twitter account that isn't somehow related to your work. In other words, do not follow film stars, singers, models, etc. This is because anyone can see who the CARD-F Twitter account follows.

Check to see who has mentioned you on Twitter each day. Do this by clicking on the link next to "Timeline" - it's called @CARD-F. Sometimes, people who are trying to get people to click on inappropriate links will put your Twitter handle in the message, so that all of your followers will see it. If you feel the link is inappropriate, delete the message.

Check your messages on Twitter (in the top menu) every day, and respond to questions or comments as appropriate.