## HOW TO ADDRESS SOCIAL STIGMA

avoid clinical terms. **Social media** is useful for reaching a large number of people with health information at relatively low cost.<sup>3</sup>

- Engaging social influencers <sup>4</sup> such as religious leaders on prompting reflection about people who are stigmatized and how to support them, or respected celebrities to amplify messages that reduce stigma. The information should be well targeted and the celebrities who are asked to communicate this information must be personally engaged, and geographically and culturally appropriate to the audiences they seek to influence. An example would be a mayor (or another key influencer) going live on social media and shaking hands with the leader of the Chinese community.
- Make sure you portray different ethnic groups. All materials should show diverse communities being impacted and working together to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Ensure that typeface, symbols
- Ethical journalism:

-1

disease. Some media outlets have, for example, focused on speculating on the source of COVID-19, Emphasizing efforts to find a vaccine and treatment can increase fear and give the impression that we are powerless to halt infections now. Instead, promote content around basic infection prevention practices, symptoms of COVID-19 and when to seek health care.

Link up: There are a number of initiatives to address stigma and stereotyping. It is key to link up to
these activities to create a movement and a positive environment that shows care and empathy for
all.

## COMMUNICATION TIPS and MESSAGES

infodemic than the current outbreak of the new coronavirus (COVID-19). This contributes to negative effects including stigmatization and

Nigeria successfully contained the 2014 Ebola outbreak that affected three other countries in West Africa partly through employing targeted social media campaigns to disseminate accurate information and correct hoax messages circulating on Twitter and Facebook. The intervention was particularly effective because international non-governmental organisations (NGOs)m