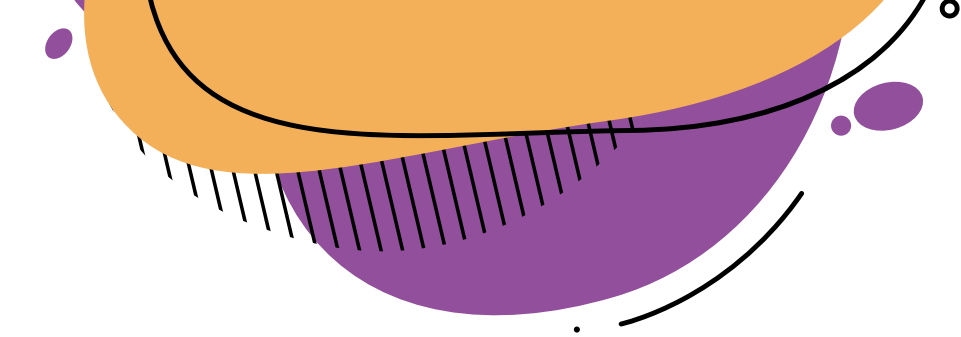


Training for Digital Community Stewards:

BUILDING SOCIAL COHESION IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES





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Acknowledgements

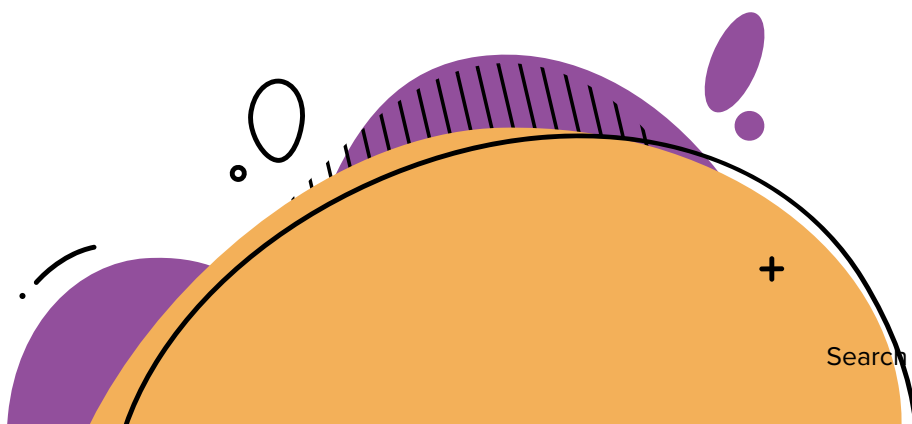
The Facilitators' Guide - Training for Digital Community Stewards: Build Social Cohesion in Online Communities is a truly collaborative product.

This training curriculum, facilitator's guide, participant booklet and PPT slides wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of Search for Common Ground Sri Lanka and its consultants. Dharini Priscilla was instrumental in developing this content, and customising the training to suit the needs of digital community stewards. Kiruthika Thurairajah and Emma Jackson provided significant edits and input throughout the process, and contributed to the development of the content, activities and in writing of this Facilitator's Guide. Sandaruwan Senanayake and Abdul Basith shared helpful technical inputs on the content and tutorials for the training.

Much appreciation also to the incredible participants in the pilot training. They came from diverse countries and backgrounds to participate in training and share substantive perspectives on improving social cohesion, trust, connection and peacebuilding in online communities. This pilot cohort served as co-creators of this project, as they came with years of experience and helped shape this training to be more relevant and useful for future cohorts through their continuous engagement, reflections and feedback.

Special gratitude goes to Lena Slachmuis, Hilde Deman, Marisa Fernando and Nawaz Mohammed for their guidance, support and leadership throughout this process; Jack Farrell and Alexandra Buccianti for their substantive edits; and Levi Health for his management of logistics and project administration, enabling the pilot cohort to meet in person.

Finally, appreciation goes to Meta for their financial support in developing this curriculum and enabling the pilot training to take place in person.

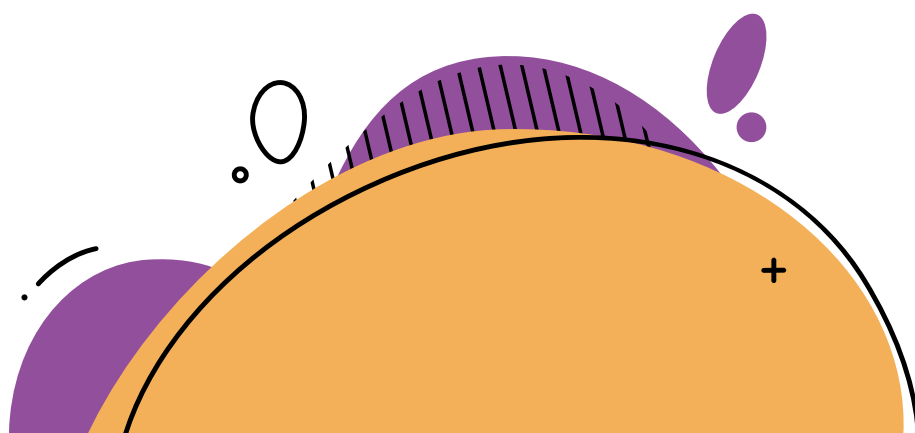




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Introduction to this Facilitator's Guide

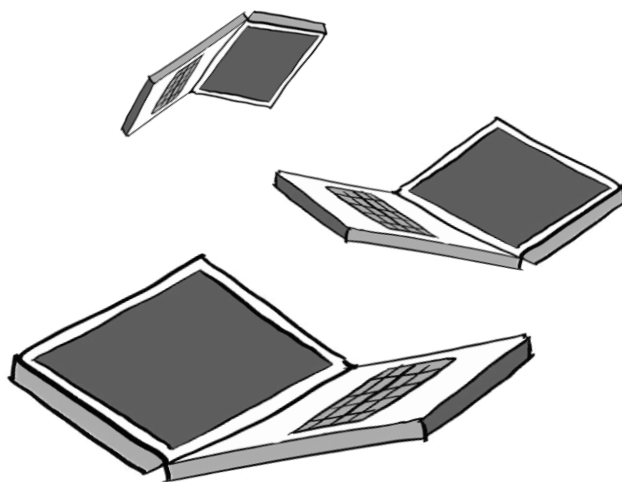


Background and Goals of the Training

BACKGROUND

Online communities have become more and more common in the post-pandemic world. Communities that met in person moved to social media to form groups on platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal and others. New online communities emerged as people were missing everyday interactions and sought to form connections in the confines of their homes. However, online communities have existed in the digital sphere for far longer. Facebook groups were established in October 2016, and since then, these groups have been utilised as platforms for connection and cohesion. Research shows that as of 2021, there are over 10 million Facebook groups, with over 1.8 billion people using them each month. There are over 70 million active admins and moderators running these groups. These numbers only go higher when we take into account that digital communities exist on other platforms such as Whatsapp and Twitter, and Telegram.

Simultaneously, online conflict and the spread of misinformation and disinformation have become more pervasive in recent years. Moderators and administrators of online communities were given responsibilities and challenges without being provided with the skill sets and resources needed to manage them ([GovLab Report, 2020](#)). Online communities, especially ones that act as a refuge for marginalised groups and those who do not have the luxury of safely forming communities in the physical world, are also often targeted, attacked and harassed. All these challenges put digital community stewards, and the members of their groups, in positions of vulnerability.



Search for Common Ground developed a training curriculum for digital community stewards on building social cohesion in online communities in 2022, with the generous support of Meta to address these issues and provide support to these emerging digital leaders. After a call for applications and a detailed screening process, Search for Common Ground brought together 17 participants from 10 countries for the global pilot training in August in Dubai. This hybrid training had six modules in person and three online. This pilot training, as it was the first of its kind, was used to test the effectiveness, relevance and usability of this curriculum.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

We define 'digital community stewards', as individuals who review user-generated content to ensure members adhere to rules, regulations and community standards of social media platforms. They act, in a sense, as first-line responders who build safe digital experiences within social media groups. This includes admins and moderators of both public and private groups on various social media platforms (i.e. Facebook, WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram, Instagram, Twitch, Discord, and Clubhouse).

This training curriculum aims to enhance the skills and perspectives of existing digital community stewards to foster social cohesion within their digital communities. Specifically, this training will provide skills and perspectives for the digital community stewards to:

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Create a better understanding of guidelines, tools and practices concerning digital safety, and improve knowledge of concepts such as misinformation, disinformation and hate speech to build safe, functional, and cohesive digital communities.
- Promote reporting and flagging practices to appropriately classify and flag negative digital narratives with higher confidence to manage digital conflict effectively.
- Improve the overall quality of safety and communication in social media platforms by fostering digital communities that respect diverse views and promote healthy discourse while continuously modifying community rules and utilising digital and soft skills to create meaningful online dialogues.

With these objectives in mind, nine core modules were created. After the pilot training, a specific introductory module was created to provide a space for sharing and reflection on the roles of digital community stewards.

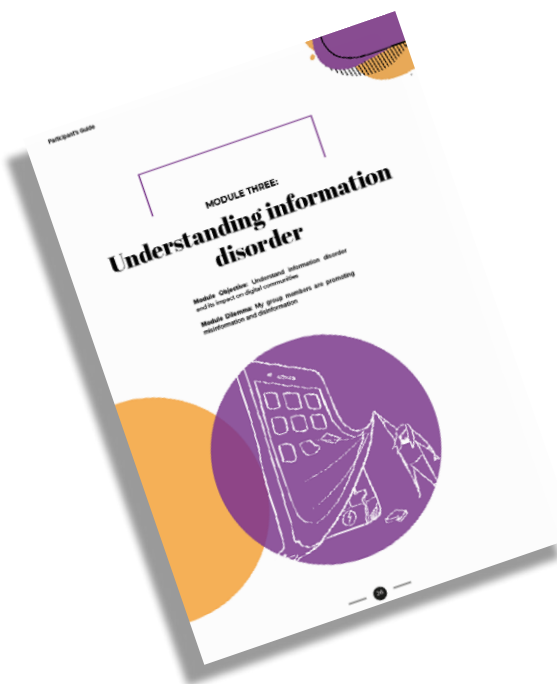
MODULES

The module titles are as follows:

Introductory Module: Digital Community Stewardship

- Module 1: Member Engagement
- Module 2: Trust and Connection
- Module 3: Understanding Information Disorder
- Module 4: Navigating Information Disorder
- Module 5: Non-Violent Communication
- Module 6: Digital Safety
- Module 7: Digital Leadership
- Module 8: Growth and Inclusivity
- Module 9: Digital Rights

While all 9 Modules were presented in the pilot training, they have been developed in a way that facilitators may pick and choose the modules depending on the training cohort selected. In general, each module was developed to take 3 hours, except the introductory module, which is only 2 hours. These modules can easily be broken down into three sessions in case there is a need for additional breaks, or individual sessions are excluded. Most of the sessions fall between 55-60 minutes each, but in some cases, the sessions vary in length depending on the topic and participant engagement. As explained more in the below section on “Customisation,” the structure of these modules and training are flexible. Each of the modules can be customised to fit your organisation’s expectations, available resources, anticipated time commitment, and training cohort’s needs.



Facilitator Guide Overview

WHO AND WHAT IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

This document is developed to guide organisers and facilitators, and trainers on how to conduct training for digital community stewards on building social cohesion in online communities. The manual is primarily prepared for Search for Common Ground affiliates, partners, or other interested organisations.

It provides the content, activities, and facilitation notes necessary to deliver a hybrid training with nine modules. This guide is specifically created for facilitators; however, some additional notes are added for organisers. In the Annex of this Guide, you will find a link to helpful printouts for activities and a participant booklet with take-home information for participants once the training has been completed.

Instructions for Facilitators

CUSTOMISATION

This training was designed with a global audience in mind. However, it is likely that future training will be more local in scope, so this will necessitate some edits depending on the context. We suggest that the facilitator or trainer reads the guide in full before presenting any material to the participants. Facilitators should review and adapt the content as needed for your country or community context. This might mean removing a module that is less relevant to your group of participants (e.g. if your

participants already have large and inclusive groups, you may choose to remove the Module on Growth and Inclusivity). Alternatively, if you feel something is missing based on your country's context or cohort's needs, you may opt to add a module, session, activity or example. Or, you are welcome to simply use one or two of these modules if you are focusing on specific elements of digital community stewardship.

We have indicated some areas where we suggest customisation in the blue "Notes" sections in each respective Module. However, the training will be more relevant to the participants if local examples are integrated throughout the entirety of the curriculum.

Note:

MODE OF DELIVERY



The pilot Digital Community Stewards Training had a hybrid delivery. The first six modules were delivered in person, and the remaining three modules were delivered online via Zoom. However, the Facilitators Guide is written in a way that allows complete flexibility in the mode of delivery. The pilot training successfully enabled a safe space for sharing and peer-to-peer exchange, and we believe this was in part due to the initial in-person delivery.

The mode of delivery can be determined based on your participant group, budget, and needs. However, please factor in additional time in your planning stages to ensure the delivery is suitable for any changes in this training programme. Wherever possible, we have added notes that suggest alternative activities depending on if the activity is in-person or hosted online.

METHODOLOGY FOR FACILITATION

The training methodology is tailored to adult or young adults and bridges theory and practice. Participants come to the training with diverse skills, experiences and perspectives, so the focus should be on encouraging participant engagement through creative activities and discussions.

The Facilitator or trainer need not be an expert in this specific field; rather, they will serve as a fellow participant whose role is to create a safe space for inclusive engagement. Specifically, they are instrumental in guiding discussions and providing some explanations of concepts the group may not be familiar with and be able to add structure or direction to the discussions as needed. However, most important is their focus on motivating participants to think creatively and critically about digital community stewardship and generate ideas about how to make day-to-day improvements in managing difficult group dynamics in the online space. We encourage the trainers to actively involve the participants in your facilitation and discussions as it is crucial for the digital community stewards to learn from each other and their online stewardship experience.



Instructions for Organisers

PARTICIPANT SELECTION PROCESS

Finding the right participants is one of the most important elements of a successful training. The methodology for participant selection in the pilot phase, was based on ensuring that the cohort is composed of group moderators and admins, as opposed to just influencers or page administrators. Since this training was developed specifically for group moderators and admins, we selected applications that provided links or information about the said group.

The criteria we used to select strong applicants in the pilot training were as follows:

- The individual currently runs and/or manages private or public community groups on social media platforms.
- The individual has a basic understanding and skills in enforcing community standards and privacy policies of relevant social media platforms.
- The individual possesses adequate skills regarding digital literacy, content moderation, interpersonal interaction, and language literacy in English and relevant local languages.

In preparation for the pilot training, we developed a short application form (can be found under resources). You may use this example, but we encourage you to create your own according to your needs. You will note that we included specific questions to ensure these participants were indeed group moderators or admins (rather than page admins and moderators), as this training focuses on this specific group. When going through the applications, we also sorted out applicants who were clearly just influencers. While influencers are important leaders and can make an impact in building social cohesion and peaceful online spaces, this training was not developed for them. You will note that we included specific tutorials on content moderation and managing groups, which is relevant for group moderators and admins, but not other roles.

RESOURCES: WHAT YOU WILL NEED

To run a Digital Community Stewards Training, make sure you have:

DIGITAL TRAINING MATERIALS (FOR BOTH ONLINE AND OFFLINE TRAININGS):

- Accounts for Mentimeter (for trainee participation), Kahoot! (optional for quizzes), Google Slides (for trainee participation) and the corresponding content (examples under resources).
- A PowerPoint Presentation (a sample PPT is included side-by-side with the Facilitators notes and also linked in the Annex).



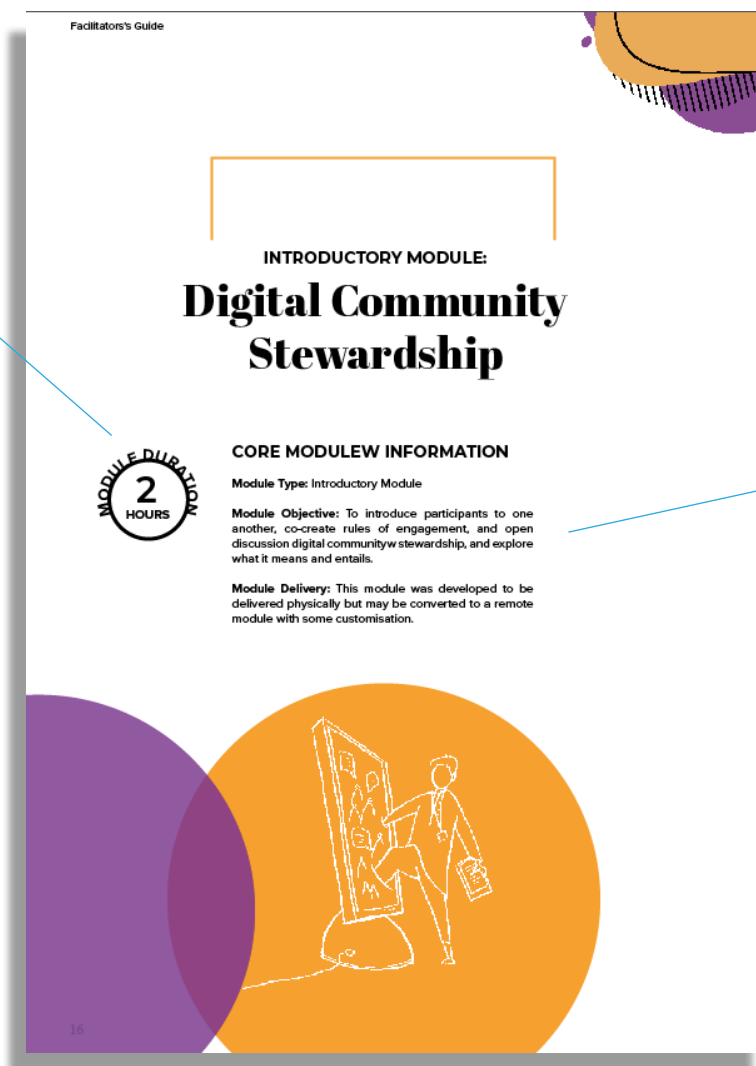
SPECIFIC FOR IN-PERSON TRAINING MATERIALS:

- A Participant attendance sheet (optional)
- Classic in-person training materials: sufficient pens, paper pads, sticky notes, flipcharts, markers, etc.
- Consider providing participants with name badges, table tents, notebooks and a pen if possible.
- Printed activity sheets and any ordered materials for activities (see [Annex I](#) for specifics)
- Technical requirements to convey to the venue: Projector, sound system (a microphone is optional, but speakers will be necessary for playing video), and the necessary wires to connect your laptops to the projector system.
- Suggested room setup: half circle facing the front, with 10–20 participants. This setup is useful for plenary sessions and ideal for small-group participation. However, it is advised to customise to suit your needs and audience.
- Please refer to Annex I for links to specific module printouts and the complete list of resources.

Using this Guide

At the beginning of each Module and Session, there is a list of specific objectives and the time or resources needed to accomplish specific activities and discussions.

MODULE DURATION



MODULE OBJECTIVE

This makes it straightforward for trainers to move through the curriculum page by page. Wherever possible, notes have also been included for the facilitator and organiser to draw attention to specific activities or explanations that may need special attention or customisation. Finally, key questions for discussion have been highlighted to keep participants engaged. Additional questions can and should be developed, but these guiding questions

will get the conversations started in a productive way. Finally, note that there will be small infographics included indicating the type of activity for each session: from the facilitator explanation, videos, group work, group discussion, self-reflection, energiser, or Q&A. A key to these infographics can be found below:

Session 3: Flagging

SESSION DURATION (55 MINS)

NOTES (Session Objective: Understand flagging and reporting practices on social media platforms)

ACTIVITY DURATION (30 MINS)

NOTES TO FACILITATOR (Trainers will introduce the session objective: to understand flagging and reporting practices on social media platforms through a tutorial.)

SLIDE NUMBER AND COLOR (84)

FLAGGING: A TUTORIAL

NOTES TO FACILITATOR (Note to Facilitator: The trainer can ask participants for a quick raising of hands to see which social media platforms are most commonly used. From there, the trainer can share two examples based on the resource below, walking through flagging and reporting practices on these platforms. The trainers should review this resource from WHO in advance of the session. Depending on how many platforms are discussed, the timing may change.)

The overall module, as demonstrated in the previous sessions, focuses on navigating and identifying misinformation and disinformation through diverse digital tools.

TUTORIAL: HOW DO YOU FLAG CONTENT?

Once deciding which social media platforms to focus on, the trainers will do a quick tutorial and demonstration about how to report and flag content on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok, Discord, LinkedIn, Viber, etc. The trainers will use this resource from WHO, and additional resources, to inform the participants about these learning practices.

QUESTIONS TO PARTICIPANTS

AN ACTIVITY (15 MINS)

The trainers will ask the participants to identify a post that spreads misinformation or disinformation (either in their group – or the overall social media platform) by utilising one of the tools discussed during the session.

Once the post has been identified, the participants will practise flagging the content with the relevant social media platform. Trainers will encourage the participants to flag more than one post.

ACTIVITY TYPE

- DISCUSSION
- ACTIVITY
- EXPLANATION
- VIDEO

Sample Agenda at a Glance

An example of a 5-day agenda for this training can be found below. As mentioned earlier, we suggest you customise the flow and structure of the training according to your needs. Please note that if this is taking place remotely, we suggest separating each module into one day, per module.

DAY 1

10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Welcome and Introductory Module on Digital Community Stewardship (2 hours) Round of Introductions / Energizers Setting the Rules of Engagement Opening Discussion Who is a Digital Community Steward? (An Exploration)
12:00 pm - 1:45 pm	Break
1:50 pm - 2:00 pm 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Optional Energiser Module One: Building Member Engagement (3 hours) Session 1: Understanding Member Engagement Session 2: Increasing Member Engagement & Facebook Badges Session 3: Member Engagement & Facebook Insights

DAY 2

8:50 am - 9:00 am 9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Optional Energiser Module Two: Trust and Connection (3 hours) Session 1: Building Trust Session 2: Building Connection Session 3: Setting up Community Guidelines
12:00 pm - 1:45 pm	Break
1:50 pm - 2:00 pm 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Optional Energiser Module Three: Understanding Information Disorder (3 hours) Session 1: Misinformation, Disinformation & Malinformation Session 2: Types of Information Disorder and Its Impact Session 3: Practising Healthy Scepticism

DAY 3

8:50 am - 9:00 am 9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Optional Energiser Module Four: Navigating Information Disorder (3 hours) Session 1: Introduction to Fact-Checking Session 2: Verification Session 3: Flagging
12:00 pm - 1:45 pm	Break
1:50 pm - 2:00 pm 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Optional Energiser Module Five: Non Violent Communication (3 hours) Session 1: Understanding Online Hate Speech Session 2: Understand Nonviolent Communication Session 3: Managing Conflict in Digital Groups

DAY 4

8:50 am - 9:00 am
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Optional Energiser

Module Six: Improving Digital Safety (3 hours)

- Session 1: Why is Digital Safety Important for Online Communities?
- Session 2: What are the Digital Safety Risks and Challenges Faced by Online Communities?
- Session 3: Responding to Digital Safety Risks and Challenges Faced by Online Communities

12:00 pm - 1:45 pm

Break

1:50 pm - 2:00 pm
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Module Seven: Leadership and Non-Violent Communication (3 hours)

- Session 1: Who is a Digital Leader? Revisiting What Makes a Digital Community Steward?
- Session 2: How to be an Efficient and Effective Digital Community Steward - Key Strategies
- Session 3: How to be an Efficient and Effective Digital Community Steward - Rely on your team
- Session 4: How to be an Efficient and Effective Digital Community Steward - Practise Self-Care

DAY 5

8:50 am - 9:00 am
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Optional Energiser

Module Eight: Growth and Inclusivity (3 hours)

- Session 1: Growth - Expanding Membership
- Session 2: Growth - Branding your Community
- Session 3: Diversity and Inclusion in Digital Communities
- Session 4: Co-Creating an Inclusive and Safe Community for All

12:00 pm - 1:45 pm

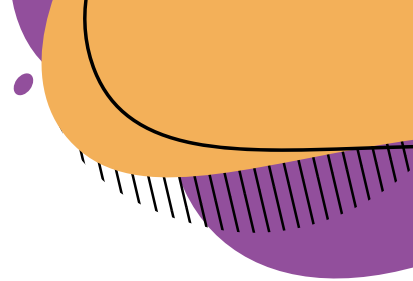
Break

1:50 pm - 2:00 pm
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Optional Energiser

Module Nine: Understand Digital Rights / Concluding Session (3 hours)

- Session 1: Community Standards - What do we need to know?
- Session 2: Digital Rights - What do we need to know?
- Closing Session: A Reflection



INTRODUCTORY MODULE:

Digital Community Stewardship

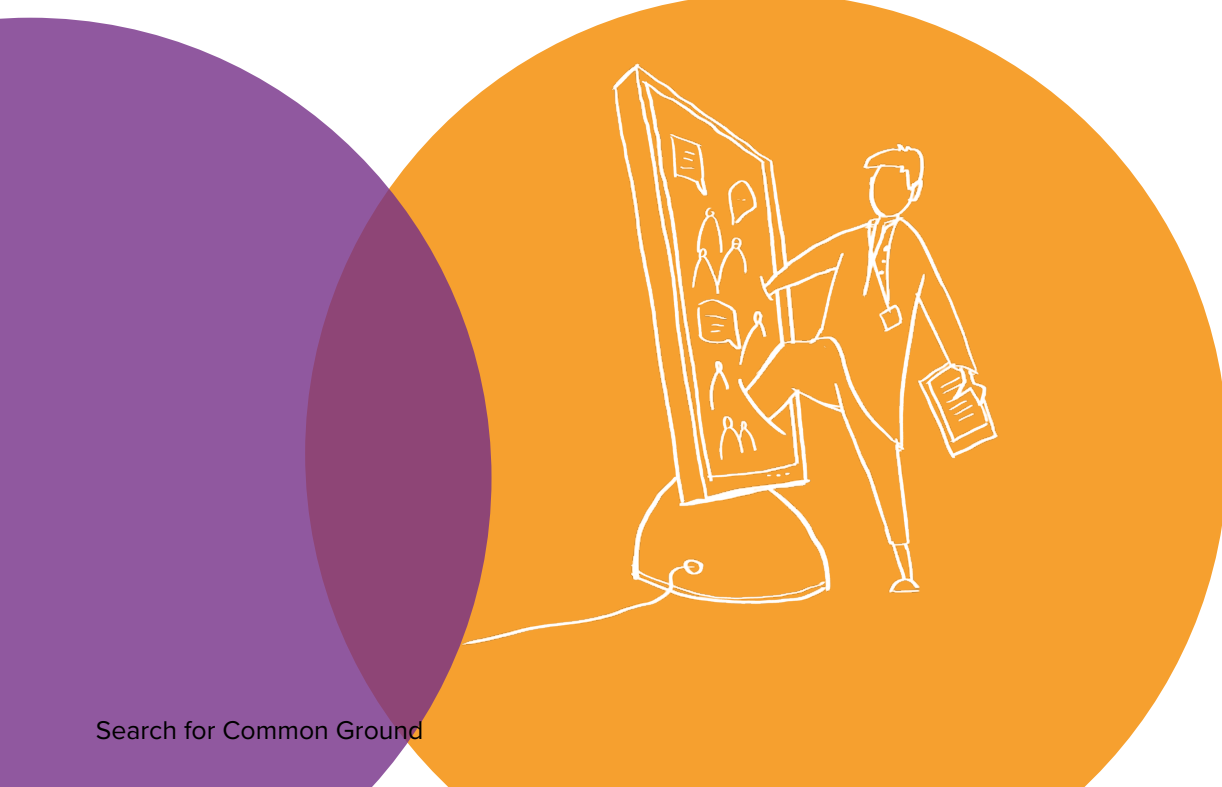


CORE MODULE INFORMATION

Module Type: Introductory Module

Module Objective: To introduce participants to one another, co-create rules of engagement, and open discussion on digital community stewardship, and explore what it means and entails.

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered physically but may be converted to a remote module with some customisation.



WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this module in detail, and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities (this link includes sample questions for Menti questions and information about how to make them). Note: Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files should be downloaded for backup (videos are embedded in PPT slides and linked below, per session).
- Introductory module-specific Resources: This introductory module uses General Training Resources. If in person, it uses sticky notes, flip charts, and markers.

Round of Introductions and Energisers



Session Objective: Meet the trainers/ facilitators and participants.

Note: There will be an opportunity for more detailed introductions later in this module. Additionally, the trainer may integrate these questions with an energiser/ ice-breaker to encourage sharing. Sample energisers are shared in Annex I.

10
MINS



INTRODUCTION TO THE TRAINING

Trainers will give a brief description of the curriculum and share some context on the purpose of the modules. Information can be drawn from the sections in this booklet under “Introduction to this Facilitator’s Guide: Background and Goals of the Training.”

Specifically, the trainer should mention: [Background and Goals of the Training](#)

1. The objective of the training.
2. The importance of the training (why we are focusing on digital community stewards in particular).
3. The background of the project: the pilot and how it was tested.

20
MINS



ROUND OF INTRODUCTIONS & ENERGISER

The Introductory Module will commence with a quick energiser and a round of introductions.

This introduction can include the following information (as an example):

Name, pronouns, where you are from, the name of your group, a brief mission of your group, size of the group, and why you joined this training.

Opening Discussion: Setting the Rules of Engagement



Session Objective: Set the shared expectations and rules of engagement/ code of conduct.

Note: if the training is taking place remotely, on applications like Google Slides, or Menti. Please note that the Code of Conduct presented in the slides is from the pilot training. However, it is best to customise based on your organisational needs.

20
MINS



SHARED EXPECTATIONS

Next, the trainers will lead a discussion on the shared expectations.

- They can ask participants to take 3-5 minutes to jot down a few ideas on sticky notes. Once complete, individuals can place these sticky notes on a flip chart.
- After the sticky notes have been posted, the trainer can ask a couple of the participants to read out loud the expectations to report back the proposed expectations. Another individual can write the expectations clearly on a flipchart. Whatever is written on the list of shared expectations should be discussed as a group.

The trainer may add a few points throughout this process and supplement the information with any expectations from their side. This will differ from facilitator to facilitator and from organisation to organisation.

10
MINS



CODE OF CONDUCT

- In addition to the expectations, trainers will provide information on safeguarding policies and code of conduct.
- Participants should be encouraged to ask questions in case any clarification is needed.

Most important is creating a safe space for sharing, with respect for others and their identities and opinions. This training will be most useful for everyone if there is an open, honest and respectful learning environment.

Who is a Digital Community Steward? (An Exploration)



Session Objective: Discuss tasks and traits that belong to digital community stewards

10
MINS



INTRODUCTION TO CONCEPTS

Note for Facilitator: In preparation for this Session, create a word cloud on Menti (or another platform) for “Community.”

Trainer to screenshare a Mentimeter word cloud



WORD CLOUD: COMMUNITY

Trainers may ask participants: *How would you describe a community in 1-2 words?* They may also move into a discussion about what these communities represent. Additional questions may include: *What is important to group members in their community? What platform is your community based on (or what social media networks is the community mainly using)?*



EXPLANATION

After completing the short discussion from the word cloud, the trainer should introduce the difference between three sets of concepts which will be mentioned throughout the training:

1. Moderator vs Administrator
2. Digital Community Steward vs Influencer
3. Group vs Page

In addition to the description above, the trainer should clarify that this training was developed for both moderators and administrators of groups (vs. pages), for digital community stewards (vs influencers).

10
MINS

HOW DO DIGITAL COMMUNITY STEWARDS EMERGE?



HOW DID YOU BECOME A COMMUNITY STEWARD? (STORYTELLING/ DISCUSSION)

Remind the participants about the beginning of their journey as community stewards and why they took on this responsibility. The purpose of this is to lead the participants into a conversation about the uniqueness of digital leaders. Most digital community stewards are neither trained nor paid for the work that they do. This is often a labour of love and an act of service. So, it is important to understand how this journey started for these participants.

Here, the key is to understand what motivates/ incentivises digital community stewards. The trainers will seek to understand why the participants take on this responsibility.

Trainers can ask: Share a brief (1-2 minute) reflection/ story around the question: *How did you become a digital community steward?* Further prompting questions include: *How did you start as an admin or moderator of your group? Did you start your group? Why?*

Trainers can encourage participants to answer these questions through visual storytelling: through pictures, drawing to add meaning and personalisation to the story.

A couple of additional points to discuss with the participants (based on research from Governance Lab):

1. Research shows that many group leaders are accidental leaders. They had little idea of how the leadership of their group would unfold when they took on the role. The job is complex and time-consuming and can impose intense pressures for which many leaders are not trained or prepared. For all the focus on leadership in contemporary society, online leadership is an emerging phenomenon that has not yet been well studied or understood.
2. When asked why they lead a group on Facebook, many group leaders said that their main reason for operating on the platform was the extraordinary global reach of Facebook and the fact that the platform and its tools were accessible, easy to use, and free of charge. Many leaders we interviewed also said that they derived significant personal satisfaction and a sense of achievement from their work.

20
MINS

WHAT MAKES A DIGITAL COMMUNITY STEWARD?

WORD CLOUD & DISCUSSION



Here, the goal of the trainers is to discuss – and understand – what traits and qualities are expected of and necessary for successful and efficient digital leaders.

The trainers will conduct this discussion in groups of 3 or 4 with a flip chart per group (Note: breakout rooms may be enabled if this module is taking place online, and each group should be given access to a Jamboard or Google Slide). The groups must develop a presentation to be shared with the plenary. The trainers will encourage the participants to make the presentation as creative and interesting as possible.

Guiding Question: *What traits and qualities are expected of and necessary for successful and efficient digital leaders?*

The participants need to do a presentation on the following question: *“What are the most important traits of a digital community steward?”*

When the participants come back to the main group, they can do their presentations. Once these are completed, the trainers will share the following:

In a research study conducted by Governance Lab in 2020, where the responses of over 15,000 social media users were surveyed, the following were identified as the three most important traits in a leader:

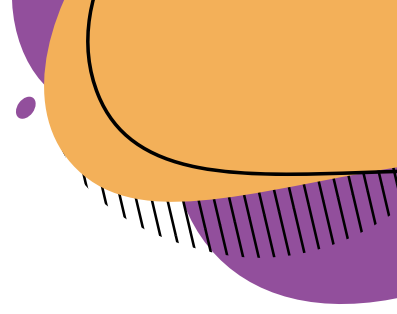
- Welcoming differences of opinion among members
- Being visible and communicating well
- Acting ethically at all times

The trainers can compare how the responses from the presentations are similar to the above research findings.

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [The power of virtual communities](#); Governance Lab
- [Keeping your group active](#); Facebook Community





MODULE ONE:

Member Engagement



CORE MODULE INFORMATION

Module Type: Phase 1 – Improving group dynamics and member engagement

Module Objective: To provide technical skills that increase member engagement in social media groups

Module Dilemma: “My group members are not active and engaged”

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered physically but may be converted to a remote module with some customisation.



WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities (this link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes and information about how to make them). Note: Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files should be downloaded for backup (videos are embedded in PPT slides and linked below, per session).

Session 1: Understanding Member Engagement



Session Duration: 60 minutes

Session Objective: Understand the meaning, dimensions, and challenges of member engagement in social media groups.

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THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING

Note for Facilitator: The trainers will present the Module’s Dilemma on Mentimeter/ Menti ([Instructions for Menti](#)). Make sure you have the presenter’s link and QR code for participants ready to avoid any technical issues.

Trainer to screen share a Mentimeter Dilemma Activity

The trainers will begin this first session by dissecting the module dilemma.

The trainers will use a scale on Mentimeter and share the following dilemma: **“My group members are not active and engaged.”**

Participants will be asked to rate the engagement and activity of their group, on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being ‘the active participation and engagement in my group is very low’ to 5 being ‘the active participation and engagement in my group is very high.’

The trainers can give participants examples or perhaps even ask about expectations/ standards within the cohort for high and low engagement.

Based on the results from Mentimeter, the trainers will get an average for the group of community stewards. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants: **What rating did you give your group, and why did you pick that number?** This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

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USER ENGAGEMENT – A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Note to Facilitator: The trainers will give the participants a brief introduction to what member engagement means and why it's important.

The following three questions can be shared through a PowerPoint presentation. Trainers must involve the participants in the discussion and prompt them to share experiences and answers by asking questions when and where necessary.

What is member engagement?

Member engagement is a measure of how people are interacting with your social media groups and content.

What are some ways we can measure member engagement?

Some standard metrics that are used to gauge engagement include likes, comments, social shares, saved items, click-throughs, or retweets. This can vary from one platform to another.

Why is member engagement important?

Engagement helps to assess how your content is perceived by your audience based on their interest in and reactions to what you share.

Note to Facilitator: As a part of the introduction, the trainers will also share examples of 'popular' community-based social media groups around the world on different platforms. A few examples of social media groups that will be shared with the participants:



MEMBER ENGAGEMENT EXAMPLES:

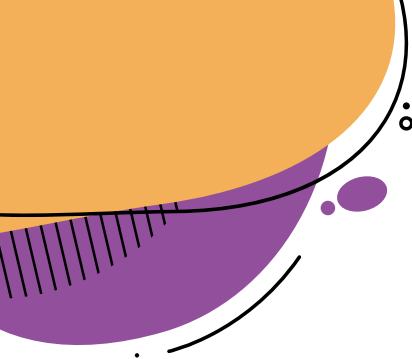
1. This group, Women of Impact, focuses on "celebrating world-shaping powerhouses" and encourages anyone who is passionate about women breaking barriers in their fields to join. The publication uses Facebook Groups to connect with its audience members in a way that aligns with issues and initiatives that they, and those audience members, care deeply about.

This group is a good example of a social media group that focuses on a particular community in our society in order to share identity-based experiences and insights.

2. The Blackout Coalition is a fast-growing, pro-solution, non-violent, social injustice consequence movement. This movement encourages black and people of colour around the world, but more so in the US, to challenge the status quo and eliminate discrimination.

This group is a good example of social media groups that focus on a purpose and movement – often founded and/ or supported by celebrities and are reinforced by websites, merchandise, and funding.





- View from my window was originally created to connect people from all over the world during the Corona lockdown by sharing their views. Every day, through our windows, we have the same view. The idea is to share the atmosphere of your daily life. It is a unique way to see the world through the personal lens of ordinary people, from the mundane to the glorious.

This group is a good example of social media groups that are created as a result of an event or crisis and thereby end up bringing people together.

Note to Facilitator: Time permitting, to encourage discussion, facilitators may ask participants: What type of group does your online community fall under? How do members engage differently in correspondence to the type of group?

Facilitators may also find examples from their region/ country to share, if applicable.

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REINFORCERS AND CHALLENGES IN GROUP PARTICIPATION – GROUP ACTIVITY & DISCUSSION

Note to Facilitator: This session will start with an activity and then delves into additional explanations around challenges and reinforcers for participation.



ACTIVITY: GROUP PARTICIPATION (REINFORCERS AND CHALLENGES)

The trainers will divide the participants into two groups.

The first group will discuss factors that reinforce group participation in social media groups. This group will consider various ways to increase group participation. Participants will be encouraged to share examples and experiences from managing their own groups.

The second group will discuss factors that challenge group participation in social media groups. This group will consider various decisions that decrease group participation. Participants will be encouraged to share examples and experiences from managing their own groups.

The groups will have 15 minutes for the internal discussion and 10 minutes for sharing their thoughts.

Note: During the sharing session (after each group has presented their discussion), the trainers can add to the findings and share some key behaviours that often reinforce or challenge participation in social media groups:



CHALLENGES:

- Privacy Violations** – There is no guarantee that members will behave and refrain from sharing private information from a group anywhere and everywhere. Screenshots, selecting and copying text, etc., can still be done. Leaks of members-only information can cause members to leave groups or even report unacceptable activity, damaging the group's reputation or evoking action by the platform. Monitoring this can be one of the toughest challenges for admins.

- **Harassment and Bullying** - Bullying and harassment happen in many places and come in many different forms. This can manifest in social media groups in various ways, from trolling to sending threatening messages and making unwanted malicious contact. Admins do not tolerate this kind of behaviour because it prevents people from feeling safe and respected in their online communities.
- **TL;DR** - The "TL;DR" texting abbreviation stands for "Too long; didn't read." Sadly, this is one of the main reasons that group activity is low. Even in groups where members have voluntarily chosen to participate and get information, their level of information overload—often due to too much group chatter—can reduce their activity, sometimes to the point of totally ignoring it.



REINFORCERS:

- **Consistency** - Being consistent in terms of topics discussed and frequency of posting activity can go a long way toward keeping groups engaged by setting standards and expectations. A disciplined approach helps build trust.
- **Patience** - Groups can take a long time to gain traction. Some admins give up on the group because of low numbers and lack of participation. Unless the purpose of the group dictates a shorter term, it is important to have at least a year's worth of data to review, which will provide more valuable insight to decide the group's lifespan.
- **Leadership** - An admin who establishes a protocol and culture, and manages it effectively and equitably for members, can do a lot to keep a group on purpose and on task.

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PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN MY GROUP – A SELF-REFLECTION

Note to Facilitator: As the next session focuses on technical strategies and social media insights that will allow digital community stewards to increase their group engagement and participation, in order to conclude the current session, trainers will facilitate this self-reflection for the stewards to understand the needs and current status of their group.



ACTIVITY (SELF-REFLECTION):

The trainers will share the following questions with the participants and give them 10 minutes to self-reflect on the questions and write down the answers. Participants are not required to share this information unless they feel it's necessary.

Questions to Pose to the Group for Self-Reflection:

1. *What kind of engagement do I see in my group - is it active or passive?*
2. *Is the engagement consistent or incident-based?*
3. *Who are some members who post and often share in my group?*
4. *What is the minimum number of members that would be ideal for my group? How many more members do I need to reach my goal?*
5. *What are some risks of having too much engagement in my group?*

Session 2: Increasing Member Engagement & Facebook Badges



Session Objective: Identify and learn various strategies that can increase member engagement in social media groups – including the use of badge features on Facebook.

Briefly introduce session objective: “Identify and learn various strategies that can increase member engagement in social media groups – including the use of badge features on Facebook.”

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ENCOURAGING MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE – HOW TO MAKE IT LESS SCARY?

Note to Facilitator: This session includes facilitator explanation. If time allows, participation should be encouraged.



FACILITATOR EXPLANATION:

Ever feel like you’re the only one posting to your group? You’re not alone; this happens in every group, especially at the beginning. There can be a number of reasons why people may not actively participate in your group. Just as there are introverts and extroverts in any real-world gathering, there are active and less vocal folks online.

Some members want to comment on everything. Others may read or observe an ongoing discussion without participating and only sometimes comment. Experienced group admins remind us that many quiet members are still getting value from your group. They’re a part of your community too.

Put yourself in a new member's shoes: What are the top few things you'd want to know about a group and its members before contributing? Use the group description and welcome post to explain some of these group basics. This helps members feel comfortable participating confidently.

Some members might need ideas about what to post. Asking easy or open-ended questions is a great way to increase group participation. If a less active member responds, interacting with them in the comments can let them know their voice matters. Many admins use polls to encourage less vocal members to add their opinion with a single tap. Going Live in your group allows members to comment and connect with you in real time. Admins tell us that even members who are reluctant to post will sit in on Facebook Live. Once people participate in these ways, they might feel more comfortable posting on their own.

The trainers can show [this video](#) of experienced group admins talking about getting members to engage in the group.



TOOLS AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT – A CREATIVE DISCUSSION (20 MINUTES)

Note for Facilitator: Trainers will jump into creative strategies that can improve the engagement and participation of members in a social media group. Note that some of the following strategies need to be customised according to the social media platform.



DISCUSSION

The following four strategies will be introduced to the participants. After introducing each strategy, the trainers will open a quick discussion based on the following prompts:

- Do any of you use this strategy in your group?*
- Do you think using this strategy will work for your group?*
- What are some challenges you anticipate in using this strategy?*



FACILITATOR EXPLANATION:(TOOLS AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT

1. Welcome Post for New Members
This is an effective way to make your new members feel welcome and valued. Stewards can develop a common welcome post for their group – and simply customise it by tagging the new members when they post it when necessary. Facebook automatically tags all the new joiners when you hit the ‘Write Welcome Post’ option under the ‘Members’ tab.
2. Repost Best Engagement
If there are 100 posts in a month in a Facebook group and 5 out of those received high engagement, stewards can repost any or all of those 5 posts that performed well in the group. Facebook Insights is useful in identifying posts with high engagement.
3. Recognize Top Contributors
This is something stewards can do on a weekly or monthly basis. Facebook Insights will help admins to identify members who are top contributors to the group. The simple act of making a ‘Thank You’ post to acknowledge and recognise the participation and engagement of these members can encourage others to contribute as well.
4. Themed Days or Weeks
This is a simple yet very effective way to increase engagement in Facebook groups. For example, ideas such as TipsTuesday, which motivates members to share tips and advice on a relevant question, or SelfieSunday, which encourages willing members to post a selfie, keeps the group active and alive – and gives them something to look forward to from the group.

Further discussion: Trainers can also ask the participants: *What other creative strategies (such as live games and polls) do you use to facilitate discussions and improve engagement in their groups?*



QUICK ACTIVITY:

Trainers can conclude the discussion with a quick activity:



Ask the participants to write a draft “Welcome Post” for their group to initiate this strategy if they don’t follow it already. Participants can do this individually or in pairs. Trainers can support the participants where necessary and encourage them to complete the activity during the training period.

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THE USE OF BADGE FEATURES ON FACEBOOK FOR ENGAGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION TO BADGE FEATURES (DISCUSSION)

Before beginning this tutorial, trainers will ask the participants:
Have any of you used badge features in your groups? (If yes, trainers will encourage them to share their experience).
 Additional questions: *Why do you use this feature? Do you find it useful? Does it have an impact on member engagement?*

THE BASICS

After the discussion, the trainers will inform the participants about the following four key areas concerning the use of badge features on Facebook.

Note: the Facilitator can ask the following questions and fill in any gaps (time-permitting), or simply provide an explanation.

What are badge features?

Facebook group badges or Facebook group member badges are the visual tags that you see beside group members’ names. These icons next to names on Facebook appear in all group posts, comments, and member profiles if the badges are enabled in the group. The members can earn most of the badges based on how they contribute to the group. Members can request some badges, like an expert badge on Facebook, based on their skills.

Why are badges important?

Badges help you learn about community leaders and single them out from the crowd of group members, making it easier for new members to reach out whenever needed. This is also a way for admins to recognise group members for their significant contributions to the group.

How do badges increase member engagement?

- **They help you recognise your most engaged members** - Whether a community drops out or thrives fully depends entirely on how active its members are. Most communities have a few main members who keep the conversations going and ensure others get what they need from the group. These members are your community's greatest asset, and it's important to give them recognition in the community. Badges are a great tool for providing this kind of recognition. They make it easier for other users to spot the people who are most helpful, knowledgeable, and consistently responsive.
- **They promote healthy competition and set achievable goals** - For your more committed users, having a goal to work toward can serve as a powerful incentive. When community members start to see that some of their peers have badges, it alerts them to the possibility of earning one (or more) themselves. For some, it will become an aspirational milestone, something that drives them to participate more—either out of competition with others or their own internal motivation to be a star helper.
- **They provide a way to reward community members** - By bestowing badges onto members who participate the most often and in the most valuable ways, you provide positive reinforcement for their actions and incentivise them to do more. People awarded with badges get to feel the pride of being recognised for their contributions. They include gaining valuable skills badge-holders can add to their resumes, particularly those who want to expand their careers as confident Digital Community Stewards.
- **They help scale support even further** - One of the greatest benefits of a community is that your community members can help each other. Badges can help scale these efforts even further. The Verified Problem Solver—or whatever label you choose—helps take work off the community steward's plate.



THE BADGES

The following are badges that are relevant to community-based groups on Facebook.

Trainers can ask the participants: *“Have any of you (or your group members) received these badges?”*

- **Admin** (For members who manage the membership, moderators, settings, and posts for the group.)
- **Moderator** (For members who manage the membership and posts for the group.)
- **Group Expert** (For members who answer questions and share their expertise with the group.)
- **New Member** (For new members. (Visible for two weeks))
- **Founding Member** (For members who helped build this group by sharing it, inviting people, or creating posts when the group was new.)
- **Valued Responder** (For people who share valuable answers to questions asked in the group. Will be shown for one month.)
- **Visual Storyteller** (Recognize those who consistently share valued photos and videos.)
- **Rising Star** (Recognize those who created engaging posts within their first month of joining.)
- **Conversation Booster** (Recognize those who created the most engaging conversations in the past month.)
- **Greeter** (Rewards users who make new members feel welcome.)
- **Top Fan** (Someone who can become a brand ambassador and increase the reach of your messaging. Top fans can serve as a catalyst, helping you quickly gain new members' trust.)

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BADGE ACTIVITY AND DISCUSSION



- **Setup:** The trainer divides participants into groups of 3 or 4.
- Participants will be asked to select a TV show, or movie series that everyone in their small group knows. They will be asked to take about 5 minutes to match at least four of the characters to badges.
 - The trainer could use the example of a show they know well. This example is for the show “Friends”: Monica is the “Admin” and “Moderator”. Phoebe is the “Rising Star,” Ross is the “Group Expert”, and Joey is a “Greeter” or “Conversation Booster”.
 - Other suggestions: Harry Potter, Marvel Movies, The Office, Game of Thrones, etc.
- This exercise is a good way for participants to start thinking about their group members and how they could engage them further through the use of Facebook Badges. Trainers can ask participants if they have any people in mind that they could give a Facebook badge and why.



Alternative activity: Once the participants are clear about the availability of different pages, the trainers will ask the participants to log into the Facebook group. Then the participant will search through the members and posts on the page to identify members who might fit the above-stated roles. This is a simple activity for the stewards to get a good sense of the capacity and resources within their social media group.

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TUTORIAL: HOW TO MANAGE FACEBOOK BADGES

This session will be concluded through a visual tutorial to help the participants understand, navigate, use, and manage these badges effectively. The trainers will use an existing Facebook group (this can be on the trainer’s account, or they can ask a participant to present their group).



Note: The following are some tutorials the trainers will use as inspiration to conduct their own visual tutorial. Additional preparation is necessary.

[How to use badges in Facebook group 2020](#)

[How To Add Badges in Your Facebook Group](#)

Session 3: Member Engagement & Facebook Insights



Session Objective: Learn the importance, use and navigation of Facebook insights and analytics to increase member engagement in social media groups.

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THE USE AND IMPORTANCE OF FACEBOOK INSIGHTS

Note to Facilitator: Even though this is a technical session, the trainers must emphasise the human elements in the groups, not just the technical elements. Digital community stewards can use this data to understand your audience not just as numbers but also as real people with likes and dislikes, communication styles, and motivations. This kind of in-depth thinking can help you customise and adapt your group moderation, admin style, and content curation. This ‘human element’ will be further discussed in Module 2 when we discuss trust building in online communities.

This final session of Module 1 is a completely technical session. During this session, the trainers will help the participants understand the importance of Facebook insights and how these insights can be used to improve member engagement, recruitment and participation. The structure of this session may proceed with a brief introduction and a tutorial and will also include a Q&A period, with room for discussion from the participants.

It is optional to identify an external resource person or expert (e.g. from a social media company) to facilitate the following tutorial. Alternatively, the Facilitators may invite a participant who has significant experience in Facebook Insights to share a tutorial and explain from their perspective.



A TECHNICAL TUTORIAL

The trainer will begin this tutorial by briefly discussing an introduction to and the importance of Facebook Insights.

It is important for digital community stewards to understand the advantage of being a leader in a digital community. Group leaders on Facebook and other online platforms also have an important advantage over offline leaders: They can access analytics to see who is joining and leaving the group and how many members are engaged, even at what time of day it might be good to post to get the attention of more members. Most offline leaders can't see aggregate trends in their communities at any given time, so they don't always know when issues are bubbling up. The key difference in online communities is the ability to measure and see the breadth and depth of member behaviours — and how to influence them.

What are Facebook Insights?

A Facebook group is so much like a human body. The minute we stop taking care of either of them, they will stop functioning and ultimately become dead. Hence, it is necessary to keep checking on our health and that of our Facebook group. For the latter, we obviously need the right set of engagement metrics.

That's where Facebook group insights help. They provide a holistic understanding of how our group is growing, how our members are engaging with the content, who is engaging the most when they are the most active, and so on.

Couple these insights with our group health data from Convosight, and we will be able to upskill our community management game forever.



DISCUSSION:

The following are the three main areas the trainers will discuss and inform the participants regarding the use of Facebook Insights through a technical tutorial:

- **Growth:** Tracks membership growth and group membership requests.
- **Engagement: Measures posts, comments and reactions over time;** reveals the most popular days and times for member engagement and lists the top posts.
- **Membership:** Identifies the top contributors and reveals demographic data about group members.



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MODULE 1 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next, the Trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.

The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity, but it is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

Note: See [Content for Training Activities](#) for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot.

The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability. Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

Finally, the trainer will ask the participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs. Therefore, a sample is not shared.

MODULE 1: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following are some existing resources and tutorials the trainers will use to facilitate the tutorial for the participants:

- [New Facebook Group Insights](#)
- [How to Improve Your Facebook Group Engagement](#)

Additional resource on [WhatsApp analytics](#) (Note: this is only accessible for business accounts so it may be less useful for participants of this target group).

Additional resource on [Instagram Insights](#) (Note: this is for Instagram pages. However, this may be useful for social media groups who are cross-posting).

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [The power of virtual communities](#): Governance Lab
- [Keeping your group active](#): Facebook Community





MODULE TWO:

Trust and Connection



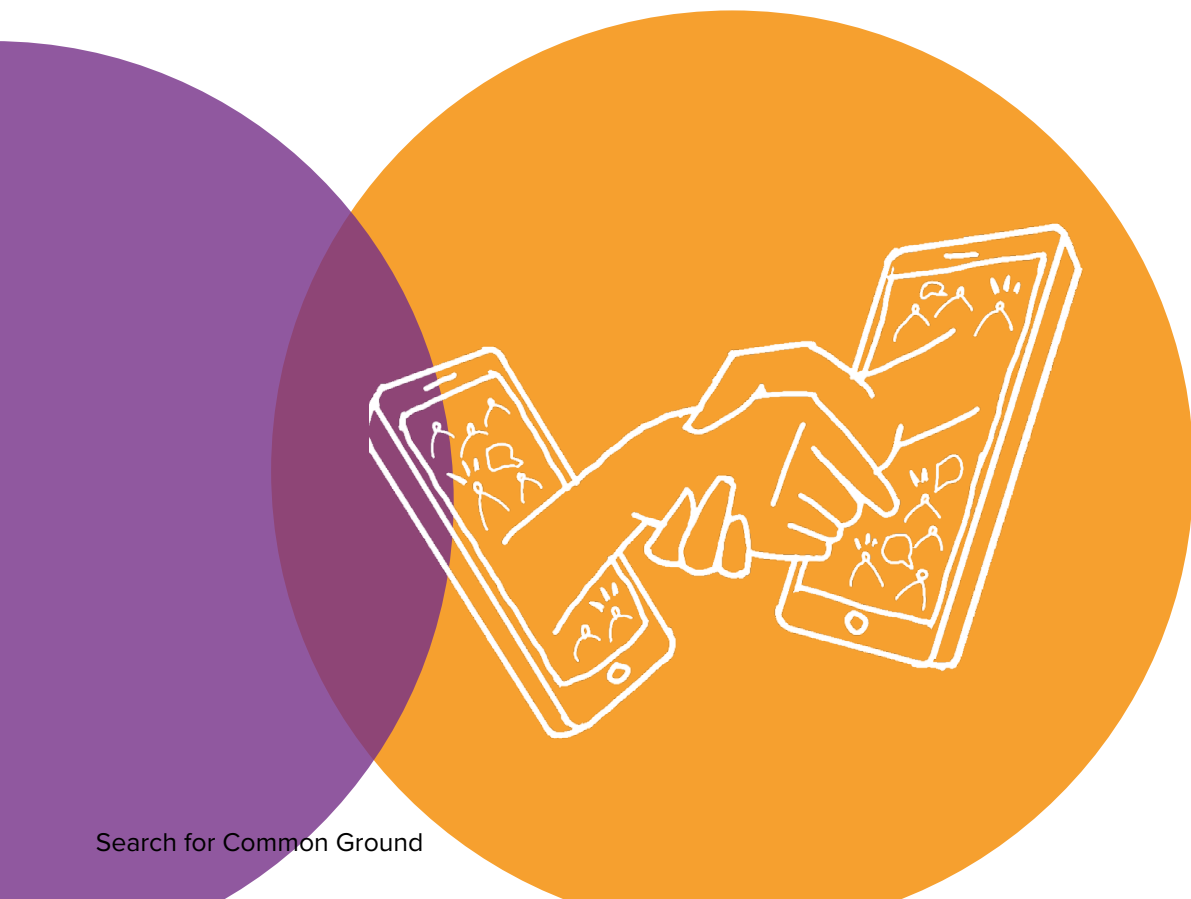
CORE MODULE INFORMATION:

Module Type: Phase 1 – Improving group dynamics and member engagement.

Module Objective: Identify strategies to build trust and connection within the group on encouraging better interaction among members.

Module Dilemma: “There is no real trust or connection in the way my group members interact with each other.”

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered physically but may be converted to a remote module with some customization.



WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/ examples relevant to your region or country)
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities (this link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes, and information about how to make them). Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files should be downloaded for backup (videos are embedded in PPT slides and linked below, per session).

Module 2 Specific Materials:

- Trust Building Activity ([Reference Video](#)). This Pipeline game can be purchased or made DIY style with PVC pipes and marbles. Note: this in-person activity can be swapped out with a cooperative/ team game of your choice. Zoom has an [“Apps” feature](#) to make the integration of this trust-building game more seamless.
- Privilege Pyramid Activity: [Linked here](#), and to be printed and cut out (one set per group).

Note: Depending on the discussion and engagement in Session 1, it may run over 60 minutes, as this was the case for the pilot training.

Session 1: Building Trust



Session Objective: Understand why trust is important in digital communities and identify ways to foster it.



Note to Facilitator: Depending on the level of participant engagement, this session may run longer than 60 minutes. The Facilitator should seek to review this session in advance and customise it as needed.

Facilitators will briefly introduce the Module and its objectives: To identify strategies to build trust and connection within the group on encouraging better interaction among members.

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THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING

Note to Facilitator: The trainers will present the Module's Dilemma on Mentimeter/ Menti ([instructions for Menti](#)). Make sure you have the presenter's link and QR code for participants ready to avoid any technical issues.

The trainers will begin the module by dissecting the module dilemma. The trainers will use a scale on Mentimeter and share the following dilemma: *“There is no real trust or connection in the way my group members interact with each other.”*

Participants will be asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 the situation with their own group, with 1 being ‘the level of trust and connection in my group is very low’ to 5 being ‘the level of trust and connection in my group is very high’.

Based on the results from Mentimeter, the trainers will get an average for the group of community stewards. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants what rating they gave their group and why they picked that number. This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

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UNDERSTANDING TRUST IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

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INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATION

The trainers will begin the discussion on trust in digital communities by connecting the objective of this session to the previous module.

In Module 1, we discussed the importance of engagement. It was about increasing the participation of members of the group. A core requirement for improving participation is to establish trust. Members cannot engage with the group – or each other – if there is no trust within this digital community.

It is not enough that the members share information, post regularly, and connect with the objective of the group. They must connect with each other. There need to be interpersonal relationships within the group.

So, this session will focus on how we can foster this digital trust to improve engagement and sharing among members - while also enhancing the overall sense of safety and confidence in the group

In order to understand trust in digital communities, the trainers will facilitate a trust-building activity for the participants.

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TRUST BUILDING ACTIVITY – THE PIPELINE

Delivery Note: This activity was developed for an in-person module. It can be adapted according to your needs (e.g. an online game can be played if the module is taking place online)

Setup: Materials needed: Half-round pipes per participant. One ball per team. The trainers will split the participants into groups of five.

Gameplay: In each group, each person will hold short pipe halves they use to balance the ball until it passes into another person's pipe halves. Then, they move towards the end of the line so they can retake the ball when it reaches them again.

This activity will require the participants to trust the members of their team to move the ball patiently and carefully while taking over from each other at the right time. The winner is anyone who can keep the ball longer without dropping it.

Activity [reference video](#).

Discussion: After completing the activity, the trainer may ask participants about the key takeaways as it relates to trust. The trainer can then explain the following: The activity demonstrates the importance of reliability and trust in group environments.

It also shows the need for timely and effective support. These are traits that are necessary for the smooth and safe functioning of a social media group. It is crucial that members of such digital communities are able to rely on each other and trust each other. Moreover, as leaders of communities, digital community stewards must identify the best approaches to ensure the continuous flow of information and interaction - while minimising risks and errors.

Trainer to screen-share the Mentimeter Word Cloud activity on Trust.

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DEFINING TRUST IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

The trainers will use the Word Cloud feature on Mentimeter to understand perceptions about trust within the group.



For the discussion, participants will be asked to: *Think of three traits they associate with a trustworthy digital community. What makes an online community feel safe and trustworthy? What are some traits that promote trust within such a group?*

Participants will be given access to a Mentimeter and will each share three traits or qualities. Once the participants complete the activity, the trainers will share the Word Cloud and **identify which traits the group most commonly associate with digital trust**. For example, most participants could have shared 'Active Listening' as their answer. Trainers can inquire why participants shared these commonly identified traits.

After the Menti is completed, the trainer will supplement the definitions of trust. A few traits to share with the participants if not already mentioned, include: Listening, Reliability, Confidence, Empathy, etc.

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TRUST IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES – WHAT DO WE KNOW

Trainers will share and discuss various findings that give insight into trust in digital communities – specifically on Facebook Groups. These findings will enable participants to better understand, perhaps even relate to the reality of and challenges in building digital trust.

- People can experience a strong sense of community from membership in such groups despite the lack of physical proximity.
- Online groups are a still fluid form of human organisation that, in many cases, attract members and leaders who are marginalised in the physical societies they inhabit and who use the platform to build new kinds of community that cannot be formed in person.
- Many of these groups have counter-cultural norms. These groups cut across traditional social groupings and bring together people normally divided by geography around a shared trait or interest.
- The flexible affordances of online platforms have enabled new kinds of leaders to emerge in these groups with unique skills in moderating often divisive dialogues, sometimes among millions of members.
- The leaders of many of these groups run them as a labour of love; they are neither trained nor paid, the rules that govern their internal operations are often uncodified, and the hosting platform - in this case, Facebook - holds significant power over their operations and future.

Note: The above findings were taken from a [research report by The Governance Lab \(2020\)](#), which interviewed leaders of 50 Facebook groups and 26 global academic and industry experts for this study of the governance and leadership of Facebook groups. Trainers can share this research report with participants.

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BUILDING TRUST IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

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QUICK DISCUSSION

The trainers will begin the discussion by asking the participants: *“Do you have any strategies or tools to build and foster trust within their digital groups.”*

Facilitators are encouraged to get the perspectives of social media group moderators and admins who are stewards of other groups (e.g. WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram) to reflect on this question, in particular, to diversify the discussion.

This sharing will allow the trainers to understand the existing practices among the stewards – and their digital groups – to facilitate trust in online environments.

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ACTIVITY

Sample time structure: Planning: 5 minutes, Presentations: 10 minutes (2 minutes per group), Explanation: 5-10 minutes (1-2 minutes per group).



After the sharing, the trainers will divide the participants into four groups and then introduce the community stewards to the ‘Four Pillars of Digital Trust’.

The participants will be asked to prepare a short skit/ play representing how a Pillar of Trust can be broken (examples are listed below if groups need some suggestions). After the short presentation is done, the other participants are to guess which Pillar of Trust is being violated, and the presenting group can give a short explanation about what their skit represents.

The trainers will conclude the session by reiterating the fact that digital trust has a technical component and a human component. This means members must follow necessary digital safety practices while also focusing on improving the quality of their interpersonal relationships. In order to build a digital community that practises and promotes trust, it is crucial that both dimensions are taken into account.

The above information on digital trust was obtained and adopted through resources from [Deloitte Insights](#).

Note to Facilitator: Once each pillar of trust is explained to the participants, each group will discuss and identify ways through which they can build these pillars. The trainers will add their own strategies (mentioned below) to the discussion. It must be noted that some of these strategies will be further dissected in the latter modules of the training. It is important for the participants to understand that trust is not simply something we feel but also something we must practise.



Pillar 1: Transparency

Transparency is imperative to build trust within digital communities. The maximisation of transparency translates to authentic community stewards who constantly keep the members updated about the purpose, objectives, and health of the group. The following are a few strategies through which we can achieve the first pillar of trust:

- Being clear and transparent about the objectives and boundaries of the group
- Reiterating the community standards of the platform and repercussions for breaking them

The participants can also share examples of how the pillar of transparency can be broken. For instance: If some members use the group to promote their business, and the admin allows it for personal benefit, this breaks trust within the group since other members were not informed of this before.



Pillar 2: Responsibility

This refers to making ethical decisions and safeguarding the welfare and dignity of the members. Any online platform is only as ethical as its creators and users. This means as leaders of these online groups, digital community stewards have the responsibility to promote fairness and well-being among interactions within the group.

The following are a few strategies through which we can achieve the second pillar of trust:

Ironing out complaints in a sensitive and timely manner. Stopping misinformation in its tracks.

The participants can also share examples of how the pillar of responsibility can be broken. For instance: If one of the members is repeatedly bullied in the group and their complaints to the admin are repeatedly ignored, the responsibility of the community steward is overlooked, which can break the trust between the members and the admins.



Pillar 3: Privacy

All members of the group have access to the information shared within the group. So, the group must acknowledge the preferences of the users regarding what information can be collected, shared, and saved. Consent must be valued and respected at all times.

The following are a few strategies through which we can achieve the third pillar of trust:

- Inform members about boundaries for sharing private information, highlighting the need to practise filtering personally identifiable information.
- Setting clear standards and regulations regarding access, control, and sharing of information within the group.

The participants can also share examples of how the pillar of privacy can be broken. For instance: If a member takes screenshots of discussions within the group and posts them elsewhere (in another platform), this can violate the privacy of the members and break trust and build mistrust among group members.



Pillar 4: Security

This requires digital community stewards to inform the members about the need for digital hygiene – both within the group and outside of the group. Heightened awareness of cyber risks and violations of digital rights will contribute to developing trust and reliability within an online community.

The following are a few strategies through which we can achieve the fourth pillar of trust:

- **Be mindful of common cyber risks and digital threats to digital communities.**
- **Promote and practise basic digital safety practices within the group.**

The participants can also share examples of how the pillar of security can be broken. For instance: If a member intentionally or unintentionally leaks the personal information posted on the group (including email addresses) and endangers the members of the group to cyber risks, it can put their digital security at risk and break trust and affect the confidence in the group.



Session 2: Building Connection



Session Objective: Understand the importance of connection in digital communities through empathy and inclusivity.

The trainer will introduce the session and the objective of Session 2 (listed above).

25
MINS



UNDERSTANDING EMPATHY IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

Note to Facilitator: This session will be conducted by dividing the participants into groups of three or four. Throughout this session, participants are expected to discuss, share, and learn within the group to acknowledge and respect diverse views and perspectives.

Depending on the discussion and engagement in Session 2, it may run over 60 minutes, as this was the case for the pilot training.

The trainers will begin the discussion on empathy with a quick activity.

5
MINS



FINDING DIGITAL COMMONALITIES- A QUICK ACTIVITY

Each group must discuss and identify 5 things all participants in the group share with each other in the digital world. This could be a trait, an interest, an identity, a habit, a preference – or anything! But it must be something all the participants share – not just some of them. The trainers will give the participants five minutes to identify these traits. Trainers will ask the participants to share their findings – but also discuss the process and experience of finding commonalities.

Trainer to screen-share a Mentimeter Word Cloud on Empathy.

5
MINS



WHAT IS EMPATHY? - A DISCUSSION

Trainers will ask the participants to share their own definition of empathy. Participants will also explain how they differentiate between empathy and sympathy.



Trainers will go back to Mentimeter and create a new Word Cloud. This time, participants will be asked to: Identify traits of an empathetic person. *What are some qualities we see in those who practise empathy? What makes someone an empath? What qualities differentiate an empath from others?*

Once the participants complete the activity, the trainers will share the Word Cloud and identify which traits the group most commonly associate with empathy. Trainers can inquire why participants shared these commonly identified traits.

Some traits the trainers can additionally contribute to the discussion:



- They don't compare
- They are free of judgement
- They listen actively without the intent to solve
- They are intuitive

3
MINS



Participants will watch [this video](#) on Empathy for further clarity.

5-10
MINS



EMPATHY IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES - AN ACTIVITY

Participants, in their groups, will recreate the earlier activity. But this time, instead of finding commonalities in the digital world, participants will be asked to: **identify traits, behaviours, and experiences that are unique to each participant in the group.** In other words, each participant must identify something the others cannot relate to and have not experienced. The trainers will give the participants five minutes to identify these traits.

Trainers will ask the participants to share their findings – but also discuss the process of finding unique experiences.



The purpose of this activity is to help participants understand that empathy is not something we simply share with individuals who are similar to us. In fact, empathy can be harder to practise when we are among people who are different from us. But empathy cannot be selective or restrictive.

3
MINS



The trainers will show [this video](#) to the participants to help them understand empathy in digital communities if time permits. Alternatively, trainers can share it with participants over a different platform.

15
MINS



UNDERSTANDING INCLUSIVITY IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

Note to Facilitator: The trainers should mention that this is just a brief introduction to Digital Inclusion and Digital Exclusion. It will be further discussed in Module 8 (Growth and Inclusivity).

DISCUSSION:

This discussion will begin with some introspection and sharing. Each participant will be asked to: *think of an incident or experience in the digital world where they either felt included or excluded*. The trainers will give the participants a few minutes to identify an experience to share with the rest of the group. This sharing activity will help the group understand diverse reasons for and instances of exclusion within our digital communities.

This can be followed up by two other questions:

1. *Who is often excluded?* (Sample responses: Women and girls, Gender and sexual minorities, Religious and ethnic minorities, Individuals with disabilities, and People living in poverty.) It is important to mention here that identities are complex and intersecting and that when someone has intersectional identities (e.g. someone can be both a sexual minority and an ethnic minority) and exclusion (online and offline) may become more apparent.
2. *What is digital inclusion?* Some sample responses: affordable, robust broadband internet service, internet-enabled devices, access to digital literacy training, and applications for online content are designed to enable and encourage self-sufficiency and collaboration.

20
MINS



BUILDING EMPATHY AND INCLUSIVITY IN DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

15
MINS



ACTIVITY - PRIVILEGE PYRAMID

The trainers will print out a range of 'digital privileges' (or rather digital rights), including anonymity, access privacy, non-discrimination, freedom of expression, etc. Sample Activity Printouts are [linked here](#). Each group will receive one set. It is suggested that groups are comprised of 3-4 participants.

Participants will have to discuss and decide which privileges they would rank as most important to least important. These decisions must be made together as a team. Facilitators will give groups about 10 minutes to discuss internally. After this, each group will present their ranking, followed by some guiding questions from the trainer.

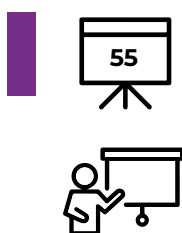
DISCUSSION:



Some guiding questions for the trainers to lead the discussion after participants rank their privileges: *What was the process like deciding as a group? Was there a consensus in the group? Why do you think some didn't feel as important as others? Which privileges felt the most important? What are your reflections on this activity?*

The purpose of this activity is to influence the participants to think about our digital experiences and how they are very much influenced by our diverse and intersectional identities. This activity helps participants realise what digital privileges they may have taken for granted and for them to recognise that their identities can influence the choices they make online as much as offline. The trainers can use this activity to enable participants to understand the importance of practising empathy and inclusivity in digital spaces.

After the activity, encourage participants who already practise empathy and inclusivity to build better connections within their social media groups to share their opinions. For example, *are there any community stewards in this group who take specific measures to make women and girls or people with disabilities feel included in your group?*

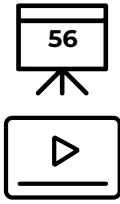


EXPLANATION:

Once participants share their experiences and suggestions, the trainers will add to the discussion by sharing the following strategies to promote empathy and inclusivity in online communities:

- **Remember community standards** – Most digital platforms have community standards that are designed and practised to protect the safety and welfare of its users. Since your group is hosted on such a platform, the members must be reminded that discrimination and harassment within the group would violate the community standards. Therefore, all members are expected to practise empathy and inclusivity at all times.
- **Reaffirm through your group rules** – Most groups, as we will see soon, will follow the rules. It is important for community stewards to reiterate the importance of inclusivity and empathy through these rules. This shows members that these values are not simply practised due to the necessity to follow the community standards established by the organisation. But also because the group values diversity, inclusion, and equity for all.
- **Celebrate Diversity** – Many social media groups make celebratory posts for big holidays. This practice should not be restricted to majority communities. For instance, if a group has members of diverse religions, posting a celebratory message only on Christmas is not enough. Similarly, depending on the group and context, key celebrations of diverse communities, such as International Day for People with Disabilities and the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia, should also be acknowledged and celebrated.
- **Promote Image Descriptions** – Alternative text can be attached to images so that when a screen reader encounters an image, it reads out the text to the end-user rather than just skipping over it. If you are using text in images, say as a header or banner, the end-user is missing out on that key information. Images on social media are becoming more accessible too, and the ability for end-users to add alt-text is now available on most platforms (like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram). Where this function is not available, the best practice is to provide an image description at the bottom of your post.

5
MINS



VIDEO ON EMPATHY AND LISTENING

This session will be concluded with [this video](#) – where the trainers will remind the participants that the most crucial step for practising empathy and inclusivity in the online and offline world is to – listen and be open.

This video can be used to start a brief conversation on online dialogue. Trainers will emphasise the importance of consistent interaction, authentic interest in communication, open replies to discourse, and debates and disagreements among group members are all essential for facilitating online dialogue.

Online dialogue is a core element of building trust. Active listening and authentic sharing are essential for building confidence in digital communities. We will further discuss and dissect the importance of online dialogue and interpersonal communications in social media groups in the latter modules.



Session 3: Setting up Community Guidelines



Session Objective: Define, set, and discuss guidelines and boundaries for social media groups



The trainer will introduce the Session 3 objective: to define, set, and discuss guidelines and boundaries for social media groups.

The purpose of this third session is to put the information and insights learned from Module 2 – as well as other modules – into practice. As discussed so far, participants are not aware that a key step in building trust and promoting connections is to practise empathy and inclusivity in our digital communities.

A core strategy for achieving the above is to have clear, well-defined, and uncompromisable guidelines that will protect the members of the groups – including those who are marginalised and made vulnerable online.

10
MINS



IDENTIFYING KEY COMPONENTS



VIDEO ON SETTING UP GROUP RULES

The session will begin with [this video](#) where experienced admins share their thoughts about setting up rules.



EXPLANATION

Facebook has an existing group rules feature. The group rules feature offers four example rules that admins can use immediately or edit. These example rules are based on some of the most common rules admins use across many types of groups. The trainers can do a quick tutorial on this feature – or even encourage one of the admins who use this feature to share their experience. As the purpose of this session is to go beyond simply using this ‘feature’ but to learn the importance of group rules and how they contribute to trust building, the trainers will not spend too much time on the above feature.



DISCUSSION

To begin this discussion, the trainers will ask the participants: *Do any of your groups already have rules or follow guidelines or a code of conduct?*



EXPLANATION & REFLECTION

This is a set of regulations that is independent of national/international laws and community standards of social media platforms. These are regulations developed by the social media group for the social media group.

If there are participants who have already established such regulations, the trainers will ask them to share the key components of these regulations – as well as their experience in setting up these regulations: *What are the regulations for your social media community? When were these established? Why did you establish them? Who created these regulations? Have you updated these regulations since then? How did the members react to these? What happens if these regulations are breached? Have you collaborated with tech companies or community-based organisations to strengthen and/or facilitate these guidelines?*

40
MINS



DEVELOPING REGULATIONS FOR DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

Note for Facilitator: This is a step-by-step activity, please refer to all slides and notes for this section, as well as the section on “Finalising Regulations for Digital Communities to guide participants through this process.”

First, the participants will be separated into groups of four or five to develop a set of guidelines. Trainers can group community stewards together, who manage similar pages. Participants are encouraged to do their research during this process.

The following are some focus areas the trainers will share with the participants to develop the community regulations:

- Transparency
- Privacy
- Accessibility
- Safety & Safeguarding
- Non-discrimination & Inclusivity

The following are some guiding notes and recommendations the trainers will share with the participants to develop the community regulations:

- Think of the best way to present these rules: Bullet points, Dos and Don'ts
- Outline and reiterate the purpose of the group
- Be clear about core group values
- Be clear about your moderation policy
- In addition to stating what is not allowed, explain what is welcomed and encouraged.
- Reflect on the overall community standards of the platform
- Consider if there are any legal restrictions or regulations preventing members from commenting on certain topics.

Based on these instructions, the groups will begin to frame the community guidelines for their social media groups.

For participants who already have regulations or rules for their group, trainers will ask them to assess their existing guidelines.

Once the participants are done brainstorming, the trainers will collate all the guidelines and develop one set of social media guidelines for all groups.

The following is one such sample set of community guidelines for reference. Note that these need to be further fleshed out and developed according to context and requirements.

- Be respectful of others and their opinions.
- Do not make personal attacks in your comments.
- Do not post content that is discriminatory, obscene, inflammatory, harassing, hateful, threatening, profane or personally abusive.
- Do not post anything that could be libellous or defamatory: if an accusation is made against a named person, for example, a member of the group, we will hide it.
- Do not post content with explicit or technical detail about self-harm or suicide.
- Do not post adverts for commercial products or services.
- Do not post repeatedly about issues that are off-topic i.e., spam

Some other resources and templates for social media guidelines of various organisations:

- [Social Media Guidelines – Community First Development](#)
- [Social Media Community Guidelines – Fresh Visions](#)
- [Social Media Guidelines and House Rules Template](#)

5
MINS



FINALISING REGULATIONS FOR DIGITAL COMMUNITIES

Note for Facilitator: The trainers will explain to the participants that these community guidelines do not have to be finalised or shared with the groups immediately. Instead, the trainers will encourage the participants to reflect on them individually (and in consultation with their group members) to review and revise accordingly. Participants will be encouraged to voice and share any challenges and risks they anticipate in sharing these regulations with the wider group.

The following are some suggestions for the digital community stewards to be mindful of when reviewing and further developing the set of guidelines:

- Contextualise and prioritise the guidelines according to the experiences and requirements of your group
- Include group members in the finalisation process. Listen to their suggestions and opinions on the draft guidelines. This is important to promote inclusivity.
- Think about how you are going to hold breaches and violations of these guidelines. Reflect on accountability.
- Decide how often these guidelines need to be reviewed and updated and decide who will be responsible for this process.
- Ensure these guidelines are available in the local languages and/ or commonly spoken languages within the group.
- Remember to practice – not just preach. Lead by example.
- Consider accessibility and where these regulations will be hosted – about section, pinned post, external link, etc.



5 -10
MINS



MODULE 2 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next, the Trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.

The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity, but it is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

Note: See [Content for Training Activities](#) for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot).

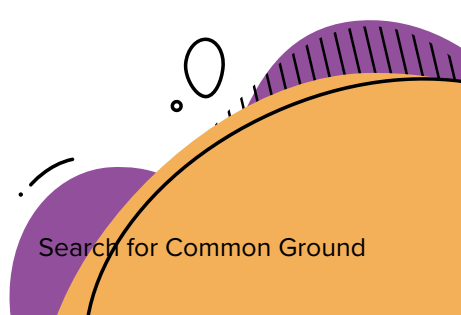
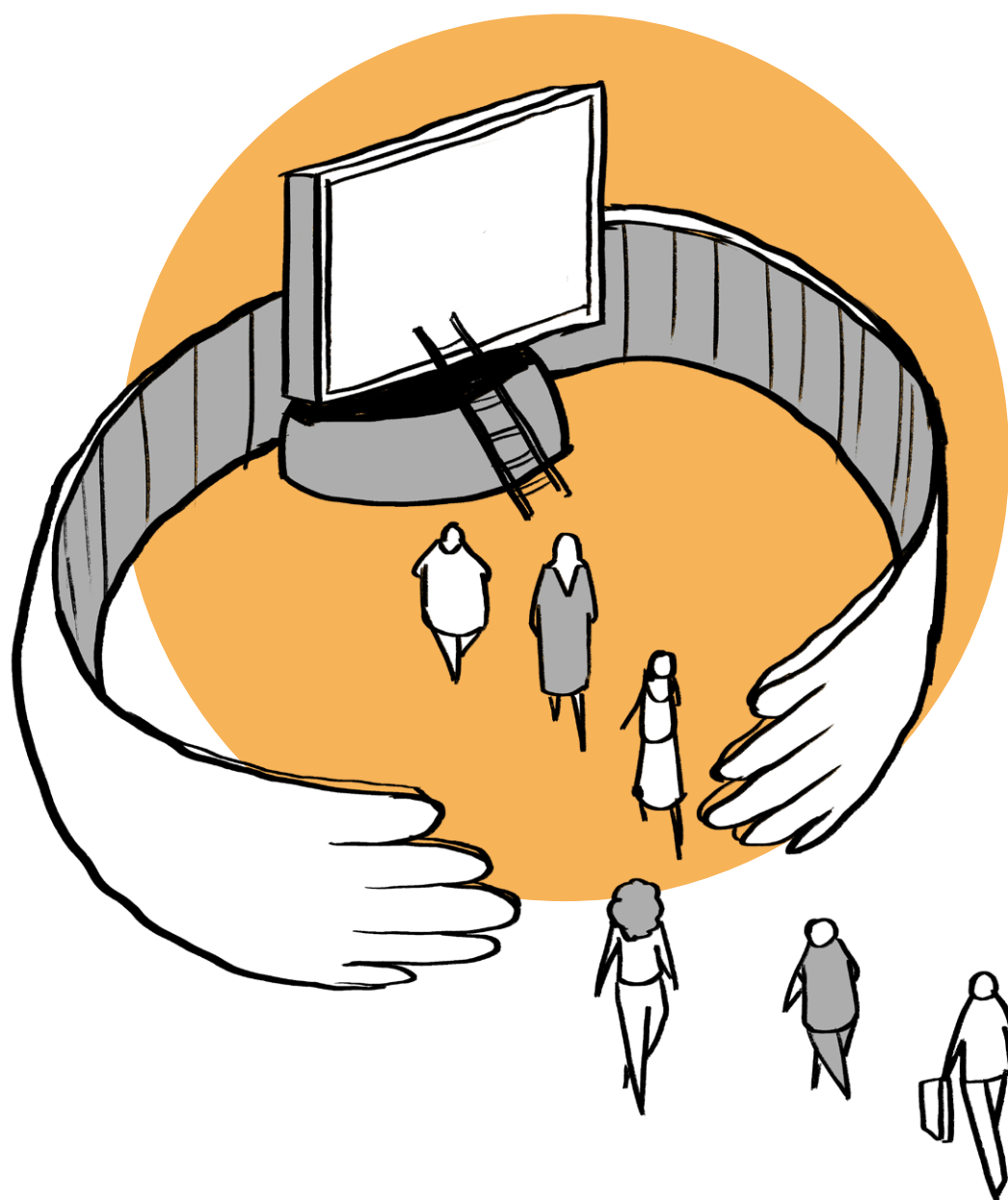
The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability.

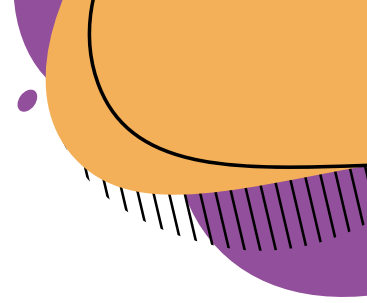
Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

Finally, the Trainers will ask the participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs, therefore a sample is not shared.

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [The power of virtual communities](#): Governance Lab
- [Establishing membership and rules](#): Facebook Community





MODULE THREE:

Ununderstanding Information Disorder



CORE MODULE INFORMATION:

Module Type: Phase 2 – Understanding and responding to information disorder

Module Objective: Understand information disorder and its impact on digital communities

Module Dilemma: “My group members are promoting misinformation and disinformation”

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered physically, but may be converted to a remote module with some customization.



HOW TO PREPARE FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities (this link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes and information about how to make them). Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files should be downloaded for backup (videos are embedded in PPT slides and linked below, per session).
- Module 3 Specific Materials:
 - Written out examples of World Event headlines (see the Misinformation Activity). Note: If the training is conducted online, these can be individually sent to each breakout group.
 - Printed out "[React!](#)" activity. Note: If the training is conducted online, different emojis can be sent via the video conferencing platform chat.

Session 1: Misinformation, Disinformation & Malinformation



Session Objective: Understand misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation in digital spaces

5
MINS



THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING

Note for Facilitator: The trainers will present the Module's Dilemma on Mentimeter/ Menti ([instructions for Menti](#)). Make sure you have the presenter's link and QR code for participants ready to avoid any technical issues.

The trainers will begin the module by dissecting the module dilemma.

The trainers will use a scale on Mentimeter and share the following dilemma: **My group members are promoting false information or fake news.**

Note for Facilitator: when presenting the dilemma, the trainers may provide a very brief explanation about misinformation and disinformation, and how these terms are preferred over 'fake news'. The following sessions will go more into this for clarity.

Participants will be asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 the situation with their own group, with 1 being 'the level of misinformation and disinformation in my group is very low' to 5 being 'the level of misinformation and disinformation in my group is very high'. Based on the results from Mentimeter, the trainers will get an average for the group of community stewards. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants what rating they gave their group and why they picked that number. This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

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MINS



MISINFORMATION

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MINS



ACTIVITY



The trainers will divide the participants into four or five groups. Each group will be given an important ongoing world event. For example, the ongoing public protests in Sri Lanka or Iran (2022). Each group must do their research on the event/incident and prepare a short report. But this report must also contain false information. Participants can change key information, including locations, objectives, dates, individuals, etc., to alter real facts. Once they are done, they must share their briefs (written or digital) with the other groups – who have to identify the false information in each news brief. Participants are encouraged to present this news brief in creative ways. After the identification, the trainers will ask the participants to share their experience in both creating and identifying false information.

Examples to be written in cards and given to participants (**Note:** These examples should be customised depending on your participant profiles, the answers should not be too obvious. These were written for an international cohort).

- Group 1 – Sri Lankan protestors storm the presidential palace in July 2022
- Group 2 – The US Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade, ending the right to abortion in June 2022
- Group 3 – WHO Director-General declares the ongoing monkeypox outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in July 2022

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MINS



FACILITATOR EXPLANATION

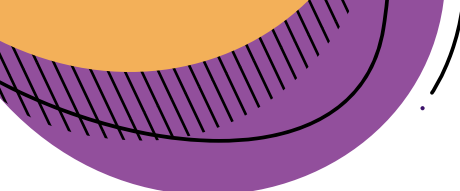


The trainers will explain the meaning of misinformation to participants.

Definition - Misinformation is false information shared by people - but they don't realise it's false or misleading, often because they're trying to help.

Example - A terror attack on the Champs Elysees in Paris on 20 April 2017 inspired a great deal of misinformation as is the case in almost all breaking news situations. Individuals on social media unwittingly published a number of rumours, including the news that a second policeman had been killed, for example. The people sharing this type of content are rarely doing so to cause harm. Rather, they are caught up in the moment, trying to be helpful, but fail to adequately inspect and verify the information they are sharing. One example was that Muslims in the UK celebrated the attack. This was debunked by the CrossCheck project on April 22, 2017.

However, it must be noted that this information could have been originally created and shared as disinformation by some people and then later shared unknowingly as misinformation – specially since CrossCheck/First Draft News referred to it as a video that was posted by Paul Golding, the leader of Britain First – a far-right British political organisation. It's valuable to explain to participants that false information that was created deliberately (disinformation) often turns into misinformation when people who reshare it don't realise it's false. Trainers can also ask the participants to share more examples from their countries and communities.



15
MINS



DISINFORMATION

10
MINS



DISINFORMATION ACTIVITY

The trainers will start this session with an activity, Two truths and a lie: Participants are invited (one at a time) to come up to the front of the room and share three statements about themselves. Two are two “truths” and one “lie”. The other participants have to guess which statement is false.

5
MINS



FACILITATOR EXPLANATION

The trainers will explain the meaning of disinformation to participants.



Definition – Disinformation is false or misleading information that is intentionally created for different reasons, including to make money, have political influence, or maliciously cause trouble or harm. However, not all people do it for the reasons mentioned above. Some deliberately create false information to see how far it would spread or to get more traction/followers on social media.

Example – In India, between 2017 and 2018, rumours of child kidnapping spread through WhatsApp, inciting violence against certain population segments and resulting in at least 33 murders and more than 99 attacks. After this incident, WhatsApp had to limit the number of times a message can be forwarded after it was seen that a spate of mob lynchings was linked to messages that circulated on WhatsApp groups in India. Trainers can ask the participants to share more examples from their countries and communities.

20
MINS



MALINFORMATION

10
MINS



ACTIVITY

The trainers will facilitate a quick game: Two Truths and a Lie.

To start, one person has to give three statements about themselves to the rest of the group. Two of these statements must be facts, or "truths," and one must be a lie. Everyone else should guess which statement they think the person made up. Once everyone has made their guess, the individual reveals which statement was the lie. Keep the game going by then choosing someone who guessed correctly to go next and then play as many rounds as you'd like and time permits.

The trainer can begin the game by sharing three statements (including a lie) about themselves. When the participants make their assumptions, ask them why they think the particular statement is a lie. Listen to their theories. This conversation will be useful when we discuss, much later on, why people believe false information.

5
MINS



FACILITATOR EXPLANATION

The trainers will explain the meaning of malinformation to participants.

Definition – Genuine information that is shared with an intent to cause harm. This could be personal details, sexual images published without consent, or leaked emails to damage someone’s reputation.

Example – In the late 90s and early 2000s, anti-abortion activist Neal Horsley collected names, pictures, and home addresses of abortion providers and published them on a website called the Nuremberg Files. He labelled that list as a “hit list.” Eight doctors from Nuremberg’s listings have been killed so far. The website celebrated the death of such murders and encouraged pro-life activists to continue killing other doctors from the hit list. Trainers can ask the participants to share more examples from their countries and communities.

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MINS



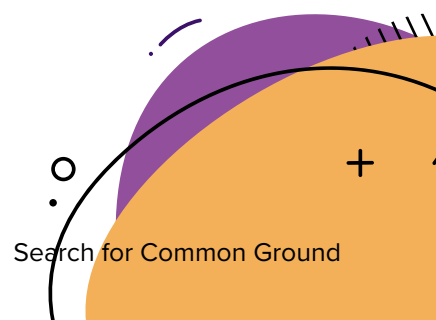
RECAP AND DISCUSSION

Finally, the trainers will take some time to answer any questions from participants.



If there are no questions, the trainers can *ask participants if they have an example of Misinformation, Malinformation, or Disinformation from their experience moderating or serving as digital community stewards in their online group.* They will further be asked to explain how they would categorise each example shared.

This concluding discussion for Session 1 will help cement the information learned through sharing of examples.



Session 2: Types of Information Disorder and Its Impact



Session Objective: Understand different manifestations of information disorder and its impact on digital spaces

Trainers will present the Session 2 objective: “Understand different manifestations of information disorder and its impact on digital spaces.”

35
MINS

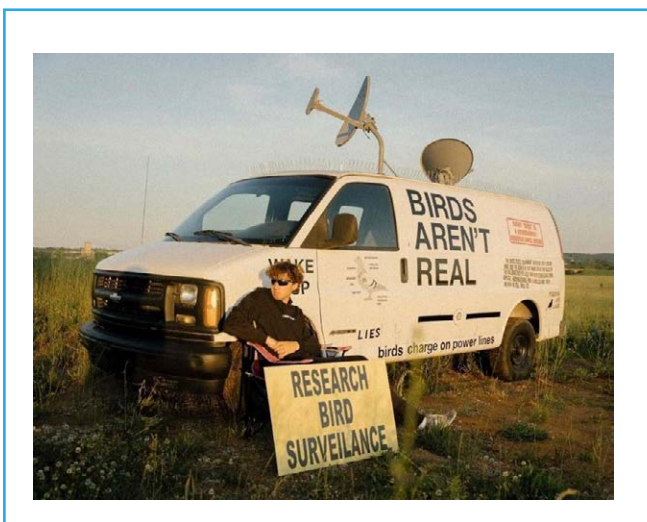


FORMS OF INFORMATION DISORDER

Trainers will explain the seven main forms of information disorder with specific examples and incidents from around the world.

Within the three overarching types of information disorder (mis-, dis- and malinformation), we also refer to seven main categories. These help us understand the complexity of this ecosystem and the shades of grey that exist between true and false. They live along a spectrum, and more than one category can apply to a specific type of content.

Note: the trainer should give the definition and example and always leave a minute or two for questions or comments from the participants.



Satire – Satire is a literary technique that employs humour, irony, or exaggeration to expose flaws and criticise individuals, governments, or society itself. Although satirical pieces are meant to be humorous, their greater purpose is often constructive social criticism. For example, you might be aware of The Onion, a very popular satirical site in the United States. El Deforma, Mexico’s version of The Onion, News Curry from Sri Lanka, and Revista Barcelona from Argentina are similar publications. The problem is when satire is used to strategically spread rumours and conspiracies. When challenged, it can be simply shrugged off “as a joke”, something not meant to be taken seriously. Furthermore, satire can also be dangerous when from its original source, it gets spread online and turned into screenshots or memes, losing its original context in the process.

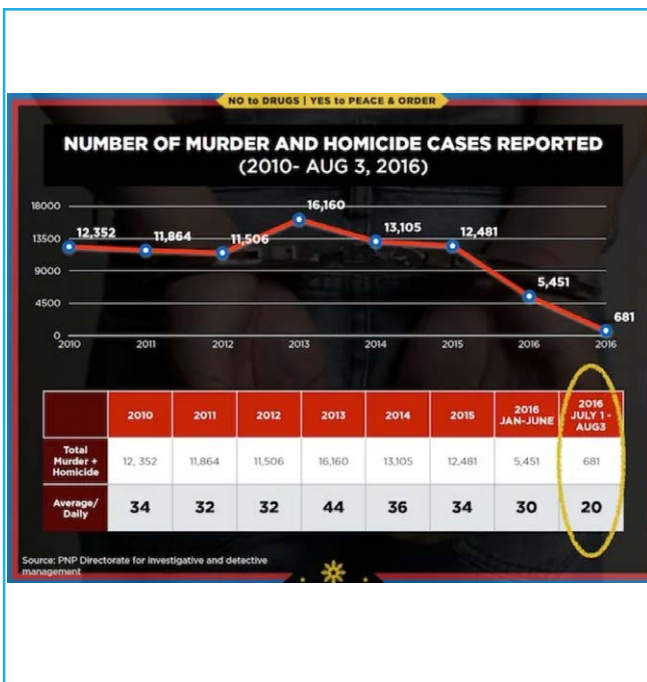


The trainers can show [this video](#) about ‘Birds Aren’t Real’ to further explain how satirical misinformation works.




False Connection – When headlines, visuals, or captions do not support the content, this is an example of a false connection. The most common example of this type of content is clickbait headlines. With the increased competition for audience attention, editors increasingly have to write headlines to attract clicks, even if when people read the article, they feel that they have been deceived. This can also happen when visuals or captions are used, particularly on sites like Facebook, to give a certain impression, which is not backed up by the text. For example, the satirical news website The Science Post published an article titled ‘Study: 70% of Facebook users only read the headline of science stories before commenting’. The body of the article didn’t have any actual text, just paragraphs of “lorem ipsum” as a placeholder. But you’d only know that if you clicked through to read it. [It was shared more than 46,000 times](#) and proved the point of the headline.

Trainers can also share the example of a clickbait headline about Prince Harry and Meghan Markle that intends to sensationalise the news and misdirect the audience, instead of presenting objective facts.



Misleading Content – What counts as ‘misleading’ can be varied and hard to define, but it usually involves omitting pieces of information to tell a story in a certain way (i.e. cropping photos to change its message, choosing statistics selectively). This is also called ‘framing’. Even the most advanced technology cannot easily detect misleading use of information because it involves contextualization and nuance. This means it requires our brains to analyse the whole story or the bigger picture to judge whether the content intentionally misleads or not.

On August 22, 2016, during the first Senate hearing on extrajudicial killings, then-senator Alan Peter Cayetano showed a line graph (Figure 1) that purports to show the declining number of murder and homicide cases reported since President Duterte assumed office. But the line graph dipped at the end mainly because the data for 2016 was split into two periods: January to June and July 1 to August 3.



A report was made to look as though it was produced by the BBC Focus on Africa programme


A fake news report about Kenya's election that is made to look as if it is from broadcaster CNN has been circulating on social media.

It comes after a **fake video imitating the BBC's Focus on Africa** programme was also distributed on Friday.

Both videos had bogus surveys showing President Uhuru Kenyatta well ahead in polls ahead of August's election.

In fact, recent opinion polls suggest neither he nor rival Raila Odinga have enough support to win outright.

Imposter Content – We always like to employ mental shortcuts to help us understand information. One very powerful shortcut is seeing a brand or person we already know and trust. When we get information coming from trusted brands or people, we are not as doubtful. But the problem is, it is very easy to make fake accounts and pretend to be someone else online. Imposter content is false or misleading content that claims to be from established brands, organisations, or personalities. For example, ahead of the Kenyan elections in 2017, BBC Africa found out that someone had created a video with a photoshopped BBC logo and strapline, and it was circulating on WhatsApp. They, therefore, had to make a video that they shared on social media, warning people not to be fooled by the fabricated video.



Jay-R Fernandez

Whuan market China..the origin of corona virus

Grabe grabe. Ganito pala market nila sa Whuan puro exotic foods binebenta dito, kaya pla lumabas ang sakit na Corona Virus. 🙄🙄

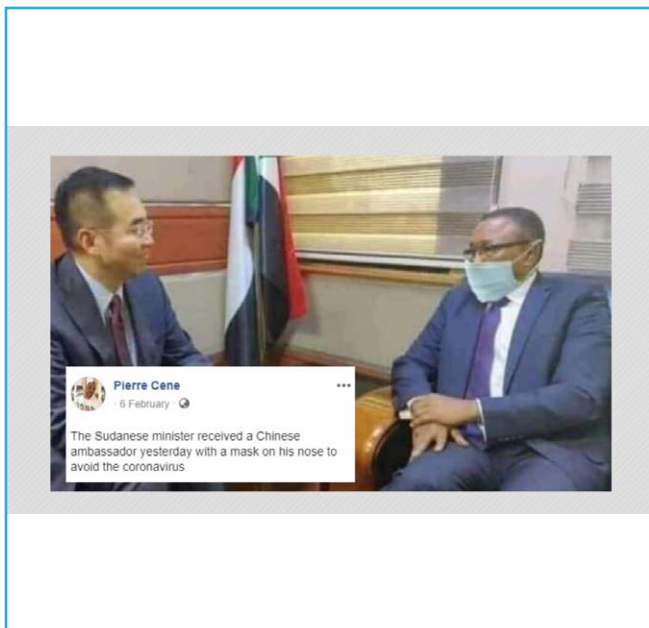
Click to expand

Like Comment Share

267 · 130 Comments

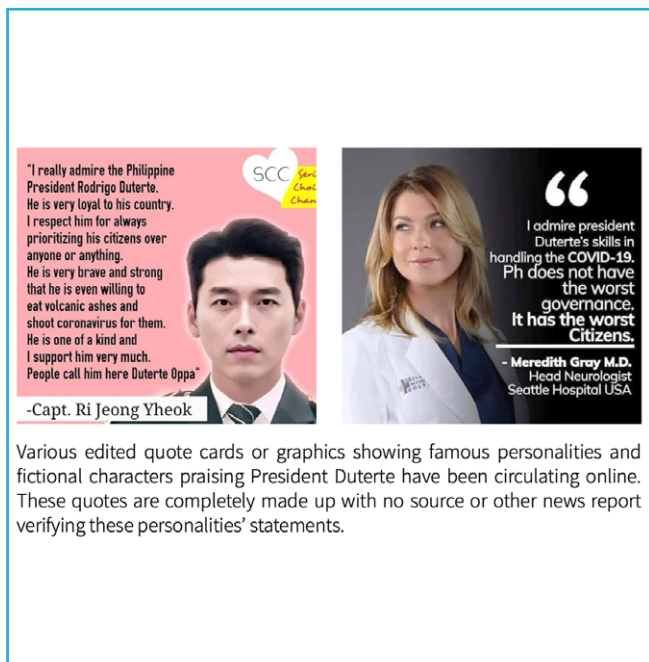
False Context – When genuine information is shared out of its original context, such as when old news stories are re-shared in the present time, it can be very dangerous. Sharing information in its proper context is very important because the context (i.e., the time, place, and situation) within which an event or news story existed helps explain the event. Sometimes, it is only a plain case of misinformation where a person mistakenly re-shares an old story. Other times, the purpose is more deliberate: to mislead people by sharing information in a different context.

One of the first viral videos after the Coronavirus outbreak in January 2020 showed a market selling bats, rats, snakes, and other animal meat products. Different versions of the video were shared online, claiming to be from the Chinese city of Wuhan, where the new virus was first reported. However, the video was originally uploaded in July 2019, and it was shot in Langowan Market in Indonesia. It was shared widely online because it played on people's anti-Chinese sentiments and preconceptions.



Manipulated Content – Manipulated content is genuine content that is altered or edited to change the message. It is not completely made up or fabricated. This is most often done with photographs and images. This kind of manipulation relies on the fact that most of us look at images while quickly scrolling through content on small phone screens.

On February 3, 2020, the Sudanese Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Chinese Ambassador to Sudan met to discuss the ongoing Coronavirus outbreak. In the next couple of weeks, the photographs of that meeting were photoshopped to show the Sudanese Minister wearing a face mask. The images were shared widely on social media, including comments like “Africans don’t want to take chances with the Chinese”.



Fabricated Content – Fabricated content is anything that is 100% false. This is the only type of content that we can really consider purely ‘fake’. Staged videos, made-up quotes, and fake websites fall under this category. ‘Deepfakes’ or ‘synthetic media’ are fabricated media produced using Artificial Intelligence (AI), which usually combines different elements of video and audio to create ‘new’ content that never actually happened.

Examples of spreading made-up quotes of nationalist messages, or praising President Rodrigo Duterte on handling COVID-19 are displayed in this image. Facilitators can also find [more examples here](#) of President Rodrigo Duterte using fabricated content and many other forms of false information during his 2016 election campaign. This is also a good place for the facilitators to emphasise that misinformation and disinformation can amplify during election campaigns.



Trainers can also use [this video](#) that uses fabricated content (deep fake) to emphasise the dangers of fabricated content.

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INFORMATION DISORDER ACTIVITY

Setup: The trainers will divide the participants into 7 groups. Each group will be assigned a “type” of information disorder as described above.

For this activity, participants will be asked to create an example of a Meme, GIF, Post, or Article that exemplifies their assigned type of information disorder.

Participants will be given 10 minutes to discuss with their group and create an example. This example can be sent to the trainer directly (e.g. via email or WhatsApp).

Each group will be given a minute to present, and the rest of the participants have to guess what type of information disorder is being displayed.

Note for Facilitator: If this activity is taking place online, participants need to be broken into small groups and given a 10-minute timer. Once the group re-assembles, they can send their examples one by one (either over the chat or share their screens) to present.

Trainers will conclude the session by emphasising the fact that these seven (7) types exist in a spectrum, and therefore more than one type can apply to a specific piece of content. For example, a clickbait article that employs a false connection may also be considered fabricated content if it is 100% false. Moreover, if it is created and uploaded by a fake account of an established brand, then you can also call it imposter content.

Session 3: Practising Healthy Scepticism



Session Objective: To foster healthy scepticism towards the self and the information environment

Trainers will introduce Session 3 and its objective (as described above).

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ACTIVITY: REACT!

Note to Facilitator: To the left you will see some examples, but it would be best if the trainer updated these news headlines to newer stories (especially those that are relevant to your context).



The trainers will start this session with an activity. The participants will be given a set of cut-out emojis with the six popular Facebook reactions (see below).



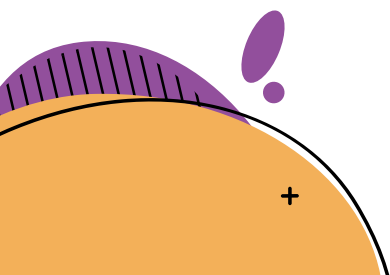
Then the trainers will show the participants a range of current headlines and news articles. The participants must view this information as if they are viewing it on a social media platform and react accordingly.

The purpose of this activity is to help participants understand how they react to various news they see online – and how sometimes these reactions can be different from one to another.

During this activity, it would also be valuable to also ask participants to think about which posts require them to go beyond simply ‘reacting’ and share with others based on how strong the emotions are they feel when looking at the post.

In this session, trainers will help the participants understand why people share misinformation and disinformation online – and why this is a widespread global issue.

Note for Facilitator: Link to [React! Printout](#) (these printouts should be cut out in advance if the activity is taking place in person). If the training is conducted online, different emojis can be sent via Zoom’s chat function or another preferred group chat platform.



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WHY DO PEOPLE BELIEVE MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION?

People believe mis- and disinformation because of two major reasons:



1. **Information appeals to our emotions** – Studies show that people remember information better when they appeal to their emotions. These are stories that make people angry, scared, anxious or make them jump for joy.

One perfect example of misinformation that banked on people's fear is when Philippines social media personality DJ Loonyo hinted about the alleged 'dangers' of coronavirus mass testing. Through a Facebook Livestream, he expressed fears over what one might be asked to drink or ingest in a 'trial-and-error' process for mass testing. His statement went viral and drew flak for spreading fear and misinformation about COVID-19 testing, which does not require ingestion nor is a trial-and-error process.

Another example is this clickbait story from the tabloid Abante Tonight about a bill making religious mementoes in hospitals optional. Its misleading headline states, "Hindi lahat Katoliko! Krus sa mga ospital pinapatanggal". The story was shared on Facebook in multiple pages and groups, garnering "angry" reactions from many Facebook users. The headline purposefully misled the readers to think that the bill intends to ban religious mementoes instead of simply making them optional.

“

I don't know kung ano ang gagamitin nila sa mass testing. Pero kung ano ang ipapainom nila, kung ano ipapagawa nila, **it's a trial and error. That's why it's mass testing.**

DJ LOONYO



2. **We carry many biases within us** – Aside from our emotions, we also tend to accept information faster and easier when they confirm our existing views. This is called '**confirmation bias**'. The danger here is when we think something is true when we feel that it must be true. This is most applicable to misleading content -- information that has some amount of truth to it rather than being entirely made up. If an online post is 'partly true' and you are already convinced by half of it, you may disregard that that post is also 'partly false' or, at the very least, incomplete.

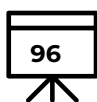
Aside from confirmation bias, there are many other hidden biases that influence one’s way of thinking. It is useful to be aware of these, too.

- Implicit bias: we associate two different things, which in our minds, are usually linked
- Sunk-cost fallacy: the more time or emotions we invest into something, the more we want to keep investing in it
- Anchoring bias: the first piece of information we hear tends to have more influence on us
- Bandwagon effect: if a lot of people act or think in a certain way, we tend to act or think the same

The trainers can *ask the participants to share examples of the above from their own experience.*

If we encounter a post online that feels right to us and triggers our emotions, our tendency is to share it with others. So, the very first step is crucial: pause, calm down, and recognise your emotional response. This is called ‘emotional scepticism’ or questioning your own emotional reactions to the messages around you.

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THE BALANCE BETWEEN TRUSTING AND DOUBTING

EXPLANATION:



The trainer can explain that finding the balance between Trusting and Doubting is a crucial task for digital community stewards. One of the main challenges in dealing with information disorder is finding trustworthy sources amidst the information overload about the coronavirus pandemic. As a rule of thumb, stewards must act with caution.

Healthy Scepticism Vs Cynicism:

To be sceptical means to have an attitude of doubt, to be always questioning. This is a really important skill for dealing with information disorder, but too much of it can be unhealthy too. It can quickly slide into cynicism which is an attitude of scorn, negativity, and general distrust in people’s motives and integrity. When you see too much disinformation everywhere, it is easy to be disheartened and develop hatred, and this is what we must strive to avoid. Remember that not all information is designed to deceive or manipulate. Our goal is to maintain the right amount of scepticism of the news we consume without sliding into the idea that good journalism does not exist.

An important strategy so that you can avoid cynicism is to learn to ask questions about ALL media messages, not just those with which you may disagree. We must be aware of and open to questioning not only the biases of media producers but also our own biases. This way, we find the right balance between trusting and doubting.



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ACTIVITY – ONLINE QUIZ (TIME PERMITTING)

The trainers can finish the session by sharing this link with the participants, who have to complete [an online quiz](#) to distinguish disinformation from satire and simply unbelievable facts.

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MODULE 3 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next, the Trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.



The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity; however, this is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

Note: See [Content for Training Activities](#) for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot).

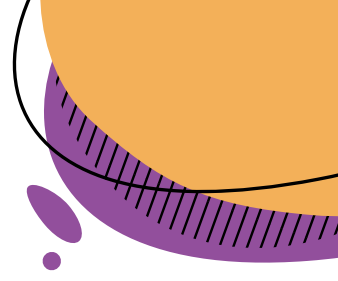
The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability. Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

Finally, the Trainer will ask the participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs, therefore a sample is not shared.

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [Understanding Information Disorder: An Online Course from First Draft News](#)
- [Online Course on Misinformation and Disinformation: BBC Media Action](#)
- [Navigating Disinformation: An Online Course by UN Women](#)
- [Online Course on Journalism: 'Fake News' & Misinformation: UNESCO](#)
- [Remote Learning Course on Dealing with Disinformation Amidst the Infodemic: Out of The Box Media Literacy Initiative](#)





MODULE FOUR:

Navigating Information Disorder



CORE MODULE INFORMATION:

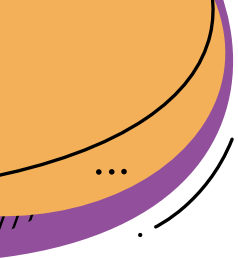
Module Type: Phase 2 – Understanding and responding to information disorder

Module Objective: Navigate information disorder to reduce its impact on digital communities

Module Dilemma: I do not know how to fact check or verify content.

Module Delivery: Physical training





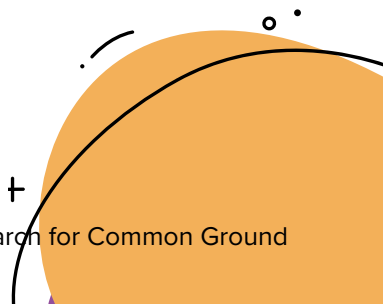
WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/ examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities (this link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes and information about how to make them). Note: Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files should be downloaded for backup (videos are embedded in PPT slides and linked below, per session).



Session 1: Introduction to Fact-Checking



Session Objective: Understand key fact-checking practices to identify misinformation and disinformation in social media groups

During the introduction, the facilitator provides a recap on Module 3, where participants learned about identifying the information disorder (and the many ways it is presented). This module will focus on navigating or responding to Information Disorder. Session 1 focuses on Fact-checking, Session 2 on Verification, and Session 3 on Flagging.

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THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING

The trainers will begin the module by dissecting the module dilemma. The trainers will use a scale on Mentimeter and share the following dilemma: *Do you feel confident fact-checking or verifying content in your group?*

Participants will be asked to rate, on a scale of 1-5, themselves on this dilemma, with 1 being 'not confident at all' and 5 being 'very confident'.

Based on the results from Mentimeter, the trainers will get an average for the group of community stewards. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants what rating they gave themselves and why they picked that number. This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

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FACT CHECKING – WHAT IS IT?

This session will go into fact-check checking practices to identify misinformation and disinformation.

The first thing the trainers will inform the participants on this matter is the fact that not everything everyone says can be fact-checked.

An important thing all digital community stewards should ask themselves while trying to fact-check a claim is whether it is verifiable (i.e. "fact-checkable") or not.

To understand this, the trainers will help the participant distinguish between opinion, prediction, and fact.

- **Opinion** - An opinion is based on a belief or point of view. It is not based on evidence that can be checked and often displays a bias as it is based on someone’s own experiences, world views, and belief systems. E.g “Pink is a better colour for girls than blue.”
- **Prediction** - A prediction is a statement predicting or promising something that will happen in the future. E.g., “It will snow in March.”
- **Fact** - A fact is backed up with evidence and can be checked or verified. E.g., “Spiders are arachnids, not insects.”



FURTHER EXPLANATION / EXAMPLES:

- Thinking something is true because we agree with it, does not make it a fact (this is an opinion).
- Two people might be in the same room – one saying it is hot and the other that it is cold. These opinions cannot be fact-checked. What can be fact-checked, however, is the exact temperature in the room.
- Digital community stewards should only fact-check facts – not opinions or predictions.



OPTIONAL VIDEO AND DISCUSSION

To further help the participants understand this distinction, the trainers will play a short video explaining fact vs opinion, if time allows.



The trainers can ask the participants about the challenges in this distinction and reiterate the difference between the three before moving on to the next segment.



HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHAT TO FACT-CHECK?

It can be a difficult task to figure out what posts and what claims need to be fact-checked. This filtering and prioritisation depend entirely on the admin of the group – who sometimes might be guided and supported by the group members.

In this case, it is important for digital community stewards to focus on the following. Asking these questions can help admins decide whether a post should be fact-checked or not.

- Is the topic important?
- Is the claim framed as a statement of fact or opinion?
- Does the claim matter? What is the potential harm?
- Have I flagged content by this group member before?

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FACT-CHECKING CHECKLIST

EXPLANATION:



Before discussing specific tools and resources, the trainers will discuss some general and key guidelines for identifying misinformation and disinformation. This discussion will be based on the following infographic.

Moreover, this will also provide the trainers with the opportunity to discuss terminology: that is, [why do we prefer the term 'information disorder' over 'fake news'?](#)

Several infographics have been developed, explaining to people how to spot fake news. We have adapted an infographic from International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (Source: [IFLA](#)) to explain some ways to fact-check:

- **Consider the source:** click away from the story to find the site and contact info
- Read beyond: headlines can be developed to be outrageous, creating “click bait” for more sharing. Read the entire article.
- **Check the author:** Quickly search the author, and ask: Are they credible or controversial? Are they real?
- **Supporting sources:** Click on the sources in the article, and ask: Does the information accurately support the story?
- **Check the date:** Is this old news? Reposting old news may not mean it is relevant to more current events.
- **Is it a joke?** If it is extremely difficult to believe, it might be satire. Look into the site and article to be sure.
- **Check your biases:** Could your own position on the subject or beliefs be affecting your judgement? Remember to take a step back and think critically about this before making judgements.
 - **Evaluate your emotions:** Misinformation and Disinformation is created to appeal to our emotions and instincts. Think about why this news is making you react in a certain way.
- **Ask the experts:** Ask a topic expert, or cross-check it with other trusted or official sources or a fact-checking site.



The trainers can show [this video](#) and emphasise the importance of the key factors discussed here.



DISCUSSION: THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL CONTEXT IN FACT-CHECKING



It is important to note that there is not a one size fits all solution or source for fact-checking. Community problems need to be assessed with community-specific knowledge. So while there is a range of digital tools around the world, there are country-specific fact-checking sites that may best- address your fact-checking concerns.

Trainers can **encourage participants to share additional examples from their local context.**

- A few important points for trainers to supplement the discussion:
- Understanding the culture, conditions, and history of a community or place is vital to understanding why people believe it and how to challenge or correct the information shared.
- In order to effectively combat misinformation, you have to make sure that those countering the misinformation are trusted in the community. And to understand

why misinformation takes different forms in different contexts.

- Example ([Source: First Draft News](#)): Africa Check (a fact-checking organisation) has found that conspiracy theories are particularly common in South Africa, something the organisation’s chief editor puts down partly to racial and economic inequality exacerbating fears of elites and groups that are not part of a person’s own “in-group.” It is important to understand that South Africa has some of the highest inequality in the world, and access to the economy is “still very dependent” on race, which can be why Africa Check sees more conspiracy theories in South Africa than in other countries in Africa.

Trainers should remind participants to be aware there are also phishing/ clickbait websites that claim to be “fact-checking” websites as well. We will get more into different verification tools in the next session in this module.

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LETS TALK ABOUT BOTS

The trainers will explain the following indicators to the participants to help them to identify bots on their social media groups, without coding skills or machine learning algorithms, but through recognising different signals/factors.

Similar to how someone might fact-check information shared by a human online, steps can be taken to better understand the indicators to tell information is being automatically circulated online via Bots.

Bots are basically social media accounts that are operated entirely by computer programs and are designed to generate posts and/ or engage with content on a particular platform. In disinformation campaigns, bots can be used to draw attention to misleading narratives, hijack platforms’ trending lists, and create the illusion of public discussion and support. Researchers and technologists take different approaches to identifying bots, using algorithms or simpler rules based on the number of posts per day.

First Draft News created this infographic on spotting a bot (or not). The trainer should review the different indicators and explain that one of these indicators in isolation likely will not mean it is a bot. Rather, it is more likely that it is a bot if multiple indicators are happening at once.

For example, it is more likely it is a Bot if:

- There is a recent creation date, hashtag spamming, and it is posting a high volume of tweets in a day. (With just one of these criteria, it is unlikely to be a Bot).
- Or, if there is a suspicious handle, a high number of followers and no followers, and inflammatory memes are being posted. (With just one of these criteria, it is unlikely to be a Bot).

More information on the above indicators can be found [here](#).

Trainers should make some space for discussion about bots, *asking the stewards about when they have encountered bots in their digital community stewardship work and how it impacted the group dynamics*.

Note: Not all participants might have come across bots, especially those who manage smaller groups or even group chats. Therefore, unless the facilitator feels the content is relevant for the group, we would suggest giving a brief introduction to bots and their influence on information disorder and encourage the participants to read more in the participant booklet or do their own research.

Session 2: Verification



Session Objective: Understand key fact-checking tools to verify the information we find on social media platforms.

This session will focus on verification (the process of establishing the truth, accuracy, or validity of something.)

The objective of this session is to: understand key fact-checking tools to verify the information we find on social media platforms) through written and visual information and tools.

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VERIFICATION: WRITTEN INFORMATION

Note for Facilitator: In this session, the trainers will share a few resources digital community stewards can use to verify and fact-check the information that is shared in their social media groups.

The trainers will give time and context to relevant topics/ events for the participants to test and experiment with all of the above tools after each tool is explained and discussed with the participants. For example, the trainers will discuss relevant topics/ events for the participants to test and experiment with different verification platforms such as RevEye or Crowdtangle.

More time should be allowed for demonstrating the verification tools and for participants to practice the tools themselves during the second session. If you are short on time, participants can be divided into groups and be asked to do mini fact-checks.

The organisers may also invite a fact-checking expert or organisation to share local fact-checking tools that are more language specific. Additionally, trainers can encourage participants to share information about other country-specific fact-checking websites that may be useful to learn about.

In general, it is important for the facilitator to think about their target audience in preparing for this training, especially if the local language is not captured in some of the below tools (it would therefore be essential that the Facilitator does some extra work in preparation to customise this section to better fit the context and audience).

FACT CHECK EXPLORER – GOOGLE

[This tool](#) allows you to easily browse and search for fact checks. For example, you can search for a politician's statement, or for a topic. You can also restrict results to a specific publisher. You can search by keywords and see a list of matching claims and the corresponding fact checks. Keywords can be anything from specific topics to full politician quotes. Basically, anything you would also put into the regular Google Search bar.

By default, results will be restricted by your browser language. You can also see results from all languages using the dropdown.

The trainers will do a quick tutorial for the participants to show how Fact Check Explorer can be used to verify the authenticity of information and how this tool can be useful in navigating misinformation and disinformation that might be shared in social media groups.

BOOLEAN SEARCH QUERY

Smart searches cut through social media chatter by finding precise snippets of information based on keywords. When searching for newsworthy content online, you have to know exactly what you're looking for, and have the skills to find it. Using the right keywords to search in the right places is key. This is where Boolean search queries help. These strings of words allow you to cut through the usual social media chatter by upgrading a default search to a multifaceted, specific search to find more precise snippets of information.

Boolean search is used when you require stricter search criteria to eliminate generic results that are loosely connected to your brand or other keywords.

A quick note: Twitter, Reddit and Google currently support Boolean searches, while YouTube supports them to some extent on top of its advanced search function. Facebook used to support Boolean searches, though it appears it no longer does.

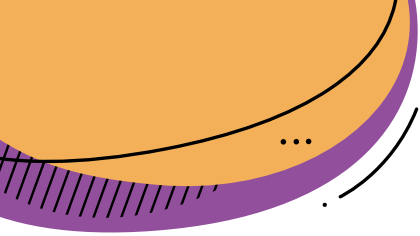
Boolean searches help you to specify exactly what you are looking or not looking for. For example, let's say you're searching for posts during a breaking news event, such as the Notre Dame fire. You want to search for Notre Dame, but you won't want posts about the Disney film. A boolean search will allow you to include posts that mention "Notre Dame" but exclude ones about the Disney film to refine your search results and find the information you're after.

This is possible with 'operators', which allow you to combine multiple keywords. There are three operators for basic searches: AND, OR, and NOT.

AND – This allows you to narrow your search to only retrieve results that combine two or more terms. For example, you might want to search for "Notre Dame" and fire.

OR – This allows you to broaden your search to retrieve results connecting two or more similar terms. This can be good for misspellings and typos. In the case of Notre Dame, you could search for "Notre Dame" OR "Notre Dam". This will retrieve all results containing either phrase.

NOT – This allows you to exclude terms you don't want to appear in your search results. For example, you might want to exclude mentions of the Disney film The Hunchback of Notre Dame, so you could write "Notre Dame" NOT "hunchback".



Key points:

- Operators (AND, OR, NOT) must be written in capitals, or they won't work
- If you're searching for phrases (terms made up of multiple words) then you have to put them in quotation marks (eg "Notre Dame")
- You won't be able to find information that has been made private by a user

The trainers can find more 'operators' for Boolean searches [here](#).

CROWDTANGLE LIVE DISPLAYS ON COVID-19

This is a very specific and [very useful resource](#) to navigate information disorder regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

CrowdTangle is a social analytics tool owned by Facebook. Their main portals require sign-up, but everyone can access their Public Live Displays. It's a quick, visual way to see how information on coronavirus is being spread on social media.

Public Live Displays are organised by region and country and show content from local media, regional World Health Organisation pages, government agencies, and local politicians, as well as social media discussion from Facebook, Instagram, and Reddit.

Each Public Live Display shows Covid-19 related posts in real-time, sorted by keyword, with public pages and accounts for each region.

The trainers will do a quick tutorial for the participants to show how CrowdTangle can be used to access social media discussions on coronavirus and how this information can be useful in navigating misinformation and disinformation that might be shared in social media groups.

The trainer should leave some time at the end of this session to allow for some more discussion and explanation. Participants can be asked: *"What tools have you used to verify written information online?"*

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VERIFICATION: VISUAL INFORMATION

IMAGES

A picture is worth a thousand words, and when it comes to disinformation, it can also be worth a thousand lies. One of the most common types of misinformation is when genuine photographs or videos (that have not been edited) are used out of context to fit a new narrative.

Let's look at such an incident: In January, Facebook posts receiving thousands of shares featured the photograph (in the PPT to the left) and claimed the people in the photo were coronavirus victims in China. A quick look at the architecture shows that it looks very European, which might raise suspicion. If you take the image, run it through a reverse image search engine, and look for previous places it has been published, you will realize that the photo was originally posted in 2014. It was an image, originally published by Reuters, of an art project in Frankfurt, which saw people lying in the street in remembrance of the victims of a Nazi concentration camp.

But with a few clicks, you can verify these types of images when they are shared online and in messaging groups.

Just as you can “Google” facts and claims, you can ask a search engine to look for similar photos and even maps on the internet to check if they’ve been used before. This is called a ‘reverse image search’ and can be done with search engines like Google or Bing.



REVEYE REVERSE IMAGE SEARCH

[This \(chrome\) extension](#) allows performing an inverse image search by right-clicking on any image on a website.

You can configure the context menu to contain either a single button with your default search engine or a cascaded menu with all included search engines.

This extension allows us to perform a search by image. It even allows us to choose between the image search engines Google and Bing.

The trainers will do a quick tutorial on how to use the RevEye extension. This is [a sample tutorial](#) that shows you how to do a reverse image search using tools such as RevEye, TinEye and Google Images.

Note: An activity we recommend here is to share an image (or few) with your participants and ask them to find out, for example, when the image was taken from or shared on the internet the first time, where it was taken from and in what context. This will help them to utilise the verification tools they learned in a practical sense.



THUMBNAILS AND VIDEOS

Whenever someone uploads a video to the internet, it creates a thumbnail, or screenshot, to show as a preview. We can manually change it, but most people don’t. Just like you can use a reverse image search to find out if a photograph has been published on the internet before, you can use thumbnails to see if a video has been previously posted online. Using reverse image search, you can take several thumbnails from any video and check whether it’s been posted on the Internet before.

InVID- The InVID project develops a video verification tool called WeVerify to detect emerging stories and assess the reliability of video content spread via social media. It is a plug-in toolkit designed to assist in fact-checking through video verification. The tool provides users with contextual information on videos, reverse image searching, video metadata, and video copyright information, along with other features to assist in verifying content.

The trainers will do a quick tutorial on how to use the InVID extension. A sample tutorial can be found [here](#).



Note for Facilitator: If time permits, finish the session with [this video](#), which looks at a case study on verifying a social media post.

Session 3: Flagging



Session Objective: Understand flagging and reporting practices on social media platforms

Trainers will introduce the session objective: to understand flagging and reporting practices on social media platforms through a tutorial.

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MINS



FLAGGING: A TUTORIAL

Note to Facilitator: The trainer can ask participants for a quick raising of hands to see which social media platforms are most commonly used. From there, the trainer can share two examples based on the resource below, walking through flagging and reporting practices on these platforms. The trainers should review [this resource](#) from WHO in advance of the session. Depending on how many platforms are discussed, the timing may change.

The overall module, as demonstrated in the previous sessions, focuses on navigating and identifying misinformation and disinformation through diverse digital tools.

TUTORIAL: HOW DO YOU FLAG CONTENT?

Once deciding which social media platforms to focus on, the trainers will do a quick tutorial and demonstration about how to report and flag content on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok, Discord, LinkedIn, Viber, etc. The trainers will use [this resource](#) from WHO, and additional resources, to inform the participants about these learning practices.

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MINS



AN ACTIVITY

The trainers will *ask the participants to identify a post that spreads misinformation or disinformation (either in their group – or the overall social media platform) by utilising one of the tools discussed during the session.*

Once the post has been identified, the participants will practise flagging the content with the relevant social media platform. Trainers will encourage the participants to flag more than one post.

Trainers can mention to participants that an important aspect of flagging such content in social media groups is to ensure the members do not repeatedly post or spread such content. Therefore, an essential part of this process is to address this issue with the member who posted the misinformation or disinformation in the group. The trainers will tackle this in more detail in Module 5, which focuses on non-violent communication.

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MINS



MODULE 4 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next the Trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.

The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity, which is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

Note: See [Content for Training Activities](#) for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot).

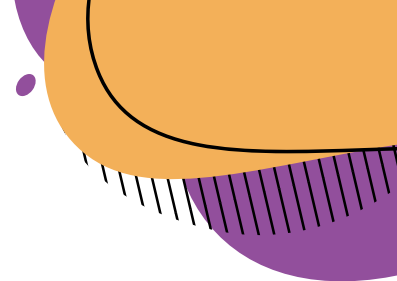
The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability.

Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

Finally, the Trainer will ask the participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs, therefore a sample is not shared.

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [Understanding Information Disorder: An Online Course from First Draft](#)
- [Online Course on Misinformation and Disinformation: BBC Media Action](#)
- [Navigating Disinformation: An Online Course by UN Women](#)
- [Online Course on Journalism: 'Fake News' & Misinformation: UNESCO](#)
- [Remote Learning Course on Dealing with Disinformation Amidst the Infodemic: Out of The Box Media Literacy Initiative](#)
- [A Citizen's Guide to Information Disorder: CSU Political Science Capstone](#)



MODULE FIVE:

Non-violent Communication



CORE MODULE INFORMATION:

Module Type: Phase 3 – Safeguarding digital communities

Module Objective: Understand and encourage the need for and practice of nonviolent communication in digital communities

Module Dilemma: My group members are insulting each other, encouraging hate speech and bullying

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered physically, but may be converted to a remote module with some customization.



WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities (this link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes and information about how to make them). Note: Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.

MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files should be downloaded for backup (videos are embedded in PPT slides and linked below, per session).
- Specific materials for Module 5: Activity on 1-way and 2-way communication: at least 2 flip charts and assorted markers.



Session 1: Understanding Online Hate Speech



Session Objective: Understand online hate speech and its diverse manifestations in digital spaces

The trainer will provide a recap on Module 4, and then introduce Module 5 on Non-Violent Communication (NVC).

The objective of Module 5 is to understand and encourage the need for, and practice of nonviolent communication in digital communities.

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THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING

Trainer to screen-share and display the Mentimeter Activity for Module 5.

The trainers will begin the module by dissecting the module dilemma.

The trainers will use a scale on Mentimeter and share the following dilemma: *“My group members are insulting each other, encouraging hate speech and bullying.”*

Participants will be asked to rate on a scale of 1-5: *“How confident are you about using non-violent communication skills with your group?”*, with 1 being ‘I’m not very confident about my non-violent communication skills’ to 5 being ‘I’m very confident about my non-violent communication skills’.

Based on the results from Mentimeter, the trainers will get an average for the group of community stewards. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants what rating they gave their group and why they picked that number. This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

The facilitator will introduce Session 1 and its objective- to understand online hate speech and its diverse manifestations in digital spaces.

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WHAT IS HATE SPEECH?

INTRODUCTION:

Hate Speech does not have a uniform or universally accepted definition in human rights law.

Hate speech regulations vary significantly by jurisdiction, particularly in how they define what constitutes hate speech and to what extent they differ by speech that is offline versus online.

There is a need for clear and narrowly circumscribed definitions of what is meant by the term “hate speech”, or objective criteria that can be applied. Over-regulation of hate speech can violate the right to freedom of expression, while under-regulation may lead to intimidation, harassment, or violence against minorities and protected groups.



OPENING DISCUSSION:

Because of this lack of a universal definition, the trainers may start the session by asking the participants to write their own definitions.

The trainers will ask the participants: *How do you define hate speech?* Participants can read out their definitions (or share them on Mentimeter or another platform) to identify the commonly used terms and phrases in all definitions.



EXPLANATION:

Next, the trainers will introduce the participants to a couple of international definitions by various organisations.



1. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Article 20 (2): Any advocacy of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility, or violence shall be prohibited by law.
2. Article 4(a) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: Dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin, must be declared an offence that is punishable by law.
3. United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech: Any kind of communication in speech, writing, or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factors.

While the third definition is not a legal definition and is broader than the notion of “incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence” - prohibited under international human rights law - it highlights three important attributes:

- Hate speech can be conveyed through any form of expression, including images, cartoons, memes, objects, gestures, and symbols and it can be disseminated offline or online.

- Hate speech is “discriminatory” - biased, bigoted, intolerant - or “pejorative” - in other words, prejudiced, contemptuous, or demeaning - of an individual or group.
- Hate speech makes reference to real, purported, or imputed “identity factors” of an individual or a group in a broad sense: “religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender,” but also any other characteristics conveying identity, such as language, economic or social origin, disability, health status, or sexual orientation, among many others.

The trainers can end this discussion by highlighting the fact that hate speech is always targeted.



DISCUSSION:

The trainers can ask the participants to **identify groups and identities that are often victimised by online hate speech**. The participants can think of communities in their own countries that are made vulnerable online due to the threat of hate speech.

The trainers can access a list of targeted groups and relevant resources for each group [here](#). This list includes national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities; migrants and refugees; women and girls; LGBTQI+; vocational targets such as journalists and activists.

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HATE SPEECH VS. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

EXPLANATION:

Free speech refers to the right to seek, receive and share information and ideas with others. But this freedom must be used responsibly and can be restricted when considered as threatening or encouraging hateful activity.

Hate speech, particularly online hate speech, targets particular groups of people (e.g minorities) and dehumanises them. Hate speech perpetrators often see “the other” as enemies and have a tendency to connect all issues in society to these targeted communities.

Trainers will reiterate the key difference: Free Speech is a way to exchange, teach, learn and challenge each other's perspectives, whereas Hate Speech is targeting particular groups with malicious intentions and insulting individual identities. Remind the participants that all internet platforms can be places where people post hateful content, whether as words, videos, photos, or memes, and cause great harm. It is up to all of us (as individuals) to consider our own online content and make sure we are not crossing the line from free speech to hate speech.

A good way to explain this confusion between free speech vs hate speech is to use the constitution. For example, this is the case in Sri Lanka:

Some people might believe that they are within their right to say what they want – both in online and offline spaces – due to the freedom of speech and expression guaranteed by our constitution. If this is the case, then it must be also pointed out that the same constitution also guarantees that all persons are equal before the law and entitled to equal protection of the law and that no citizen will be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion, place of birth or any such grounds. Explain the relevance of both Article 14(1)(a) (Freedom of Expression) and article 12 (right to equality) of our constitution so that our participants understand that hate speech is not only immoral and unethical but also goes against the law.

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ACTIVITY – A REVIEW OF CASE STUDIES



EXPLANATION:

According to international law (ICCPR), any advocacy of discriminatory hatred that constitutes incitement to violence, hostility or discrimination is considered hate speech that should be prohibited. However, it's not easy for anyone, including digital community stewards, to identify if a particular post or statement can be labelled as above.

Trainers will explain that, as mentioned in the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, hate speech can be expressed in different ways and can vary based on its intensity. The following are different forms of hate speech growing in terms of its intensity. Refer to the presentation for more examples and information on the types.

Make sure to take your time with each type and explain it clearly with as many examples as possible. The purpose of this discussion is not just to help the participants identify hate speech but also to understand that hate speech does not exist in a vacuum. Instead, it increases while reflecting a changing political context that allows it to grow. A few sample case studies can be accessed [here](#). The trainers will identify more recent and country-specific cases for the activity.

TYPES OF HATE SPEECH

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Disagreement	This involves disagreeing with the ideas or beliefs of a particular group.	Feminism does not exist. All feminists are wrong
Negative Actions	This highlights 'negative' nonviolent actions associated with the group.	Pro-choice activists want to ruin the future of our country by supporting abortions
Negative character	This includes negative characterization or insults towards a particular group.	All homosexuals are pedophiles.
Demonising and dehumanising	This involves belittling groups and equating them to subhuman entities.	Muslim people are pigs or homosexuals are monsters.
Violence	This outrightly calls for violence against the specific group.	Let's kill all Asians. Let's drive them out of our country.



ACTIVITY:

Once these dimensions are explained, the trainers will split the participants into groups of four or five. Each group will be given a case study to examine. The participants must read the case study, which depicts online hate speech and identify different dimensions of hate speech exhibited in the incident.



This examination will allow them to connect these different dimensions of hate speech to real-life incidents.

Session 2: Understand Nonviolent Communication



Session Objective: Understand, practice, and promote nonviolent communication in digital spaces

Trainers will introduce Session 2 and its objective: to understand, practice, and promote non-violent communication in digital spaces.

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ACTIVITY – ONE-WAY AND TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION



ACTIVITY:

The purpose of this activity is to help the participants understand the difference between one-way and two-way communication.

Here are the instructions for the activity:

Seek out four volunteers. Send two out of the room and show the picture of a shape (for example, a rectangle with a circle inside) to the other two. Remind them not to show their picture to anybody. Ask for one of them to wait for the second part of the exercise. Invite one of the other volunteers back inside.

Explain that they are going to draw what the other person tells them. They cannot ask any questions (this is 'one-way communication'). The 'instructor' (the participant with the drawing) stands behind the flipchart (or with his/her back to the board). The 'instructor' describes the picture to the participant on the flip chart (the 'artist'). The 'artist' draws the picture based on the instructions given. If you are using a flip chart, turn to a new page. If you are using a board, ensure that you can reproduce the drawing and then clean the board.

Ask the second 'instructor' to come forward and bring in the second volunteer from outside. This time the instructor can watch what the artist is doing and make comments on it, and the artist should ask questions (two-way communication).



DISCUSSION:

When the drawing is completed, compare the two drawings. *Ask the volunteers how they felt when they were either instructing or drawing.* Show the participants the original drawing. *Ask the group which drawing is the most accurate (and why).* Then discuss the following questions:

- *What is positive about having only the instructor telling you what to draw?*
- *What is negative about having only the instructor telling you what to draw?*
- *What is positive about letting the artist ask questions about the drawing?*
- *What is negative about letting the artist ask questions about the drawing?*
- *Do you think people talk to one another as if we were the instructor telling the artist what to do without letting them ask questions? Does this happen online? Does this happen in groups? Why do you think so?*

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HOW IS DIGITAL COMMUNICATION DIFFERENT FROM IN-PERSON COMMUNICATION?



DISCUSSION:

The trainers will *ask the participants to quickly share how digital communication is different from in-person communication.*

EXPLANATION:

The trainers will then supplement the information shared by explaining the following points:

1. **Scope and Scale:** One person can send out a hateful or false message that is seen by millions of people all over the world. Hundreds of people can respond via a comment section.
2. **Anonymity:** Digital platforms allow people to communicate more easily with people they have never met and do not know.
3. **Less nonverbal cues:** Nonverbal cues such as eye contact, facial expression, hand gestures, and posture offer more opportunities for humanising and feeling empathy for others. These are missing in digital dialogue.
4. **Less Context:** In-person dialogue often relies on context cues, including ambience to help set a positive tone. These are missing in digital dialogue.
5. **Shorter messages:** Social media platforms emphasise short communication. Twitter limits messages to 280 characters. TikTok limits the amount of time to 60 seconds. With less space, people simplify their message to explain what they believe but rarely explain what experiences have led them to those beliefs or any complexity on the issue.

6. **More Emotional:** Emotional content spreads more rapidly. Comments or stories that evoke anger are more likely to receive engagement with “likes” or emoji markers. People may speak in more dramatic terms on social media to make up for lack of nonverbal cues.
7. **Easier to Leave a Discussion:** Digital dialogue is easier to walk away from when discussions become tense. It can be harder to physically leave an in-person dialogue, so more people may “stay through the hard times.”
8. **More Public Witnesses and Less Privacy:** Digital communication involves silent onlookers, witnesses, or bystanders. A post with communication between 2-10 people who leave comments and respond to others is common on social media. What is distinct is that the post may have hundreds or thousands of silent witnesses who read and observe the interaction.
9. **More Shaming, Humiliation, and Dehumanisation and Less Dignity:** People communicate in ways on social media that are rarely seen in physical interactions. It is easier to speak harshly to shame, judge, humiliate, and dehumanise strangers on social media than it is in the physical world. People may be openly attacked and experience humiliation from public shaming on social media.
10. **Bots:** In the physical world, people do not wonder whether they are talking to a robot. On social media, there are thousands of robots (‘bots’) pretending to be people. Social media bots are created for a variety of reasons, both good and bad. When thousands of bots begin sharing a piece of false information, it gives others the false impression that the information is popular.

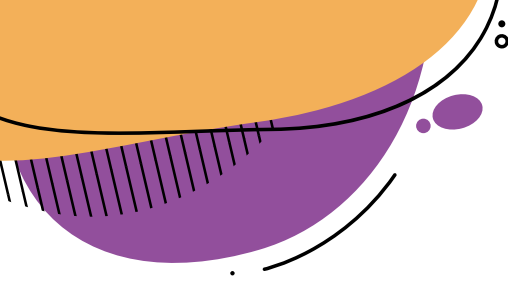
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WHAT ARE COMMON DIGITAL RESPONSES TO PROBLEMATIC SPEECH?

Note to Facilitator: The trainers will identify examples for each of the following situations. Alternatively, they may use the example videos prepared in the PPT slides to the left. However, please note that the prepared examples may not be applicable or accessible to all countries/ regions.

There are at least six broad patterns of responses in comment sections on social media. These strategies work better or worse depending on different audiences and contexts. They can be used together or on their own. Each can be done publicly or privately.

1. **Silent Bystanders and Conflict Avoiders.** Conflict avoidance, or choosing to be a silent bystander, is by far the most common approach people take when they encounter tense, conflicted conversations on religion, politics, health, or other issues. Silent bystanders watch but do not intervene in the digital conflict, hate speech, or disinformation. In the physical world, people may rarely witness abusive behaviour toward others. But online, the scale of conflict, hate, and false information is so great that some may feel overwhelmed by the idea of responding to it. Bystanders may choose silence for fear of making the situation worse or being implicated and pulled into the conflict.
2. **Shaming and Emotional Responses.** Shaming is a form of “negative counterspeech” in which someone observes a comment that they perceive is harmful to others, and they shame the speaker by denouncing the values or harming them. Shaming may mock or ridicule the speaker’s beliefs, demonstrate inconsistencies in a speaker’s thinking, question their goals, or highlight the negative impact of their speech on other people. In their review of organic examples of counterspeech on Twitter, researchers found that rebuking hate speech often led to apologies or deletion of the original content. Note: An example of shaming and emotional responses can be shown here ([video](#)).



3. **Fact-based Responses.** Some respond to social media comments spreading false information or conspiracy theories with fact-based arguments. Fact-checking can inadvertently increase the number of people who see false information. But fact checking can work if it creates doubt in some observers so that sharing of the false information declines or is deleted. It seems to work best when done with a group of supportive fact-checkers who reinforce each other. Note: an example of a fact-based response can be shown here [\(video\)](#).
4. **Distraction, Humour, or Positive Responses.** Another type of response to problematic speech is using humour to lighten the mood or even mock a hateful or false comment. Research on counter-speech suggests this may be helpful in some cases. It may also result in more conflict. This sensitive strategy requires care. Note: an example of this type of humour-based response can be shown here [\(video\)](#).
5. **Private or Public Requests to Remove or Edit.** Another form of response is to write a public or private message to the person who wrote a problematic comment on a social media platform to make them aware that the comment is viewed as offensive and to explain why it is offensive, and then to ask them to remove or edit their comment.
6. **Upstanders.** Upstanding refers to bystanders who are witnessing harassment or hate speech to intervene on behalf of the person being harassed or victimised by hate speech. Upstanders or “cyber-Samaritans” is someone who models upstanding by dissenting to harmful posts by challenging the bully or supporting the victim. When this happens, other people are more likely to join in to support. Note: an example of “upstanding” can be shown here [\(video\)](#).

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HOW TO PRACTISE NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION?

The trainers will begin this session by pointing out that these above-mentioned responses do not always convince people. The trainers can share [this video](#) about ‘why facts don’t convince people,’ to explain in more depth.



DISCUSSION:

Before the trainers explain Non-Violent Communication in detail, they will **ask participants to share their definitions and perspectives about the meaning of ‘violent communication’.**



EXPLANATION:

If “violent” means acting in ways that result in hurt or harm, then much of what is communicated (judging others, bullying, having racial bias, blaming, finger-pointing, discriminating, speaking without listening, criticising others or ourselves, name-calling, reacting when angry, using political rhetoric, being defensive or judging who’s “good/bad” or what’s “right/wrong” with people)—could indeed be called “violent communication.”

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is sometimes referred to as compassionate communication. Its purpose is to strengthen our ability to inspire compassion and to respond compassionately to others and to ourselves. NVC guides us to reframe how to express ourselves and hear others by focusing our consciousness on what we are observing, feeling, needing and requesting.



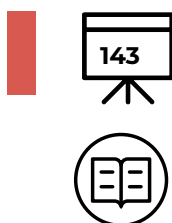
Observations - NVC emphasises observation without judgement. This means presenting the simple facts we have observed. For example, instead of saying, “You have abandoned our group and never post anything anymore,” you can say, “I noticed that you don’t participate in the group as much as you used to.”

Feelings - NVC involves taking responsibility for your feelings. This requires a change in perspective of how others’ words and actions affect our feelings. In NVC, what others say and do is the stimulus but not the cause of feelings. When faced with a negative message from someone else, NVC illuminates four options. To illustrate these options, let’s use the example of criticism, “You’re so selfish”:

- Take it personally: “I really am selfish...”
- Fight back: “I’m not selfish; you’re selfish!”
- Consider your own feelings and needs: Say something like: “When I hear you say that I am selfish, I feel hurt because I need some recognition of the effort I make to consider your preferences.”
- Consider the other person’s feelings and needs: Ask something like: “Are you feeling hurt because you need more consideration for your preferences?”

Needs - Taking the next step, NVC makes the connection between feelings and unmet needs in the individual. These needs are common and fundamental to all human beings. The outer expression of feelings, such as anger and frustration, are seen as indicators of needs, such as love and acceptance, that are unfulfilled. For example, if a moderator of a group is feeling angry at the interactions of some group members, we need to dig deeper and think about what unmet need is causing this feeling. Is the moderator unsupported by the other members? Are they overwhelmed by the responsibilities? Are they not seen and appreciated enough?

Requests - NVC’s final step is to make specific, doable requests for things that enrich the requester’s life. They are made in such a way that it enables the person to respond compassionately to the request. Requests are never demanded. NVC considers demands always to be violent, intimidating, and forceful – the source of many ineffective and unhelpful communication exchanges. Requests in NVC are positive. This means requesting what you want rather than what you don’t want. An example of this would be saying: “I’d like you to support me in moderating some of the content” rather than “I don’t want you to ignore me and let me do all the work by myself”.



ACTIVITY – USING “I” STATEMENTS

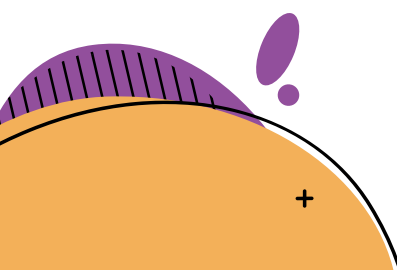
The trainers can finish this session by doing an activity that will help the participants put their learnings about NVC into practice.

Using “I” statements is a vital component of NVC, as it allows the speaker to own their statements and take responsibility for their needs and feelings. The trainers will use this activity to help the moderators with this important skill.

The trainers will share various statements with the participants – one scenario per individual. All that needs to be done is for the participants to rephrase the statement by using the following template.

“I” feel ----- [emotion] when ----- [situation/context/challenge]”.
 For example: “You always talk about your amazing weekend when you know I have no days off” can be rephrased as “I feel left out when I can’t join in your weekend plans”.

The trainers will identify a range of context-specific statements for this activity.



Session 3: Managing Conflict in Digital Groups



Session Objective: Understand how to manage conflict between members in social media groups and digital communities

The trainers introduce participants to Session 3 and its objective: to understand how to manage conflict between members in social media groups and digital communities.

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HOW DO YOU MANAGE CONFLICT IN SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS?



DISCUSSION:

The trainers will begin this session by asking the participants: *What kind of conflict occurs (or is likely to occur) among your group members?*

Are there any topics people argue about? Can you think of any group members who are likely to begin or enable conflict? How would you feel during these situations? How does conflict in your group make you feel?

The trainers will encourage the participants to share their thoughts and experiences on the above questions before moving forward to the following key practices for managing conflict in groups.



EXPLANATION:

Preventing conflict - A quick throwback to group rules

Many admins say preventing conflict starts with writing great rules, which serve as guidelines for member behaviour. Experienced admins recommend posting these rules long before you think you need them. Clear guidelines are useful for overall group culture when their tone is positive. Describe the behaviours you want to encourage, rather than listing only things members should not do.

The trainers can also ask the participants to share an experience or story here. *Can anyone think of a situation where conflict or escalation of the conflict was prevented because the admin reminded the members of the group rules and reinforced them at the right moment?*

This sharing will add value to the discussion.

Reaching Out Privately

Experienced admins recommend privately reaching out to members involved in conflict situations. Taking the time to have a private conversation can make members feel heard and respected. Many admins share that after a private conversation, people have returned to the group as valuable and supportive members. Here is what the digital community stewards can do:

- Get to know the people involved to understand the source of conflict.
- Reach out privately to the people involved in a conflict situation and remind them of the rules.
- Help them understand how they can positively contribute to the group.

The trainers can ask the participants to share an experience or story here.

In addition, you can also share the experience and [advice of group admin Joelle](#) who talks about making people feel heard.



This is also a good place to discuss active listening – which is a recurring theme in this training. The trainers will show [this video](#) to the participants to explain the basic components of active listening.

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MANAGING CONFLICT BETWEEN MEMBERS



EXPLANATION:

From time to time, a social media group may experience conflict between members. Conflict can arise from a difference of opinion, misunderstanding, confusion, or controversy. Respectful disagreement and debate can be part of a healthy community. If a disagreement turns disrespectful or breaks group rules, admin actions can help get the group back on the right track.

When conflict occurs, such as a heated conversation in a thread, experienced admins recommend acting quickly. Get involved before the situation escalates. Speedy action helps reset the tone of the conversation and lets group members know admins care by being present.

If there is a thread that has gone off track, experienced admins recommend the following:

- Engage with the member in the comments and try to reset the tone of the conversation.
- If needed, restate the rules in the comments of the thread and turn off commenting.
- Leave the thread visible so others can learn what happened.

Some admins temporarily turn on post approvals to calm things down. Once things have cooled down, they'll turn post approvals off again.

If moderation isn't working, consider temporarily muting the member. Allow some time for the discussion (and the member) to cool down. When all else fails, admins should feel empowered to remove members from your group.



DISCUSSION:

The trainers can [ask the participants to share an experience or story here](#).

In research on group moderators and admins (e.g. from the GovLab report), many admins were initially unsure about removing people from the group but realised later that it was sometimes necessary. As an admin, you uphold the culture and rules of your community. Members appreciate your moderation, including removing other members who aren't following your community's rules.

In extreme cases, such as something that goes against Community Standards (nudity, hate speech, or threats of violence), you or someone on your team can report the post to the platform.

It is unlikely that admins can watch your group all the time. Experienced admins recommend enlisting members' help by asking them to report heated conversations to an admin so they can take appropriate action.

A note on managing difficult members:

A little bit of conflict is inevitable (even healthy) in most groups, but managing conflict can be especially challenging when you have a bad actor in your group.

Often this can be prevented by establishing great rules and screening new members carefully, but sometimes you'll need to take action against group members who are causing conflict. This could mean working with your team or other group members to resolve the issue, or in some cases, it may be necessary to remove someone from the group.



[Show this video](#) to the participants where a group of social media admins discuss their strategies for dealing with bad actors.

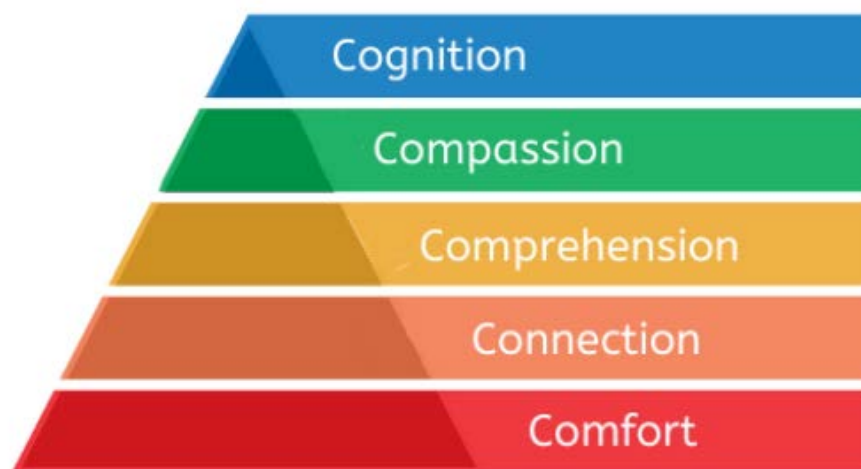
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MANAGING CONFLICT AND NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION

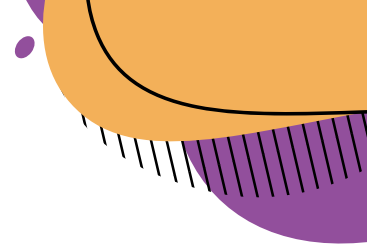
A tool that is highly useful when practising Non-Violent Communication (NVC) - especially with group members who might disagree with admins - is the Change Conversation Pyramid developed by Smart Politics. Trainers will introduce the participants to the following five strategies and encourage them to practise them in situations of conflict.

- **Comfort** - Make them feel safe enough to talk with you.
- **Connection** - Earn their trust by discussing opinions you have in common.
- **Comprehension** - Learn their point of view so they feel heard.
- **Compassion** - Show you care so they will listen to your perspective.
- **Cognition** - Gently encourage rethinking or a change in perspective through their self-reflection.



Here are some digital communication tools that will allow you to handle this situation:

1. **Work to prevent conflict before it happens** - No group is conflict-proof, but if you are proactive, you can work to make sure people know what's allowed and that when conflicts do arise they're solved in a consistent way. The first thing is to have clear rules that are visible within your group. Also, consider keeping a list of group members you're concerned about among your team so you can watch for problem behaviour.
2. **Recognize problems before they get worse** - Once you have a foundation of rules, the next step is working with your community and your admin team to keep conflict from escalating. Encourage your group members to report bad actors to you or your team. This will allow you to get involved early and contain most problems.
3. **Understand their point of view and diffuse the situation**- Reach out to members who have broken the rules quickly. One good tactic is to contact these members privately, using chat or even a call, to remind them of the rules. Sometimes a simple misunderstanding can escalate because members feel cornered or ganged up on. Use active listening and try to get to the core feelings behind their statements. Repeat their feelings back to them so you can get to an understanding, i.e., "what I hear you saying...".
4. **Work with your team** - Your team is there to back you up when things get tricky, so don't forget to use them. When dealing with a bad actor, alert your team as soon as you can. That way, they know that you're on top of it, and they can be there to offer support.
5. **Mute or remove someone and inform them about the rules they have violated** - Sometimes, if someone is acting out in your group, they just need a little time to calm down. You can use the 'mute' feature to temporarily stop someone from posting or commenting in the group. You'll be able to set the duration of time they're muted, and you can specify to them which group rule they broke. If muting doesn't do it, you can remove them from the group.
6. **Address the situation** - For tough situations that have escalated in your group, you can make sure everyone understands the actions you've taken by addressing them directly. You can clear the air and control any rumours by going Live, posting, or leaving a comment for the group. Be prepared to answer questions.



Here are some technical tools on Facebook Groups that will allow you to manage bad actors:

1. **Post approvals** - Post approvals will allow you and your moderation team to screen incoming posts. This is a great way to proactively manage the content that's shared in your group. The trainers will do a quick tutorial to show participants how to do this.
2. **Maintain an admin activity log** - An admin activity log helps you to keep track of admin and moderator activity. Here you can filter and view notes on different actions taken by your team. The trainers will do a quick tutorial to show participants how to do this.
3. **Set up member questions** - Setting up member questions can help you better screen incoming members to your group. The trainers will do a quick tutorial to show participants how to do this.
4. **Turn on keyword alerts** - If you know if a certain language is banned or indicative of conflict, you can flag those keywords and get alerted when they come up in your group. The trainers will do a quick tutorial to show participants how to do this.

The trainers can end the session with this key message - Dealing with bad actors can be a drain on your time and emotional energy. You can often de-escalate a situation by approaching it proactively and with empathy. But at the end of the day, if someone isn't right for your group, you should always feel free to remove them.



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MODULE 5 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next, the Trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.

The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity. However, this is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

See the [Content for Training Activities](#) document for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot.

The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability. Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

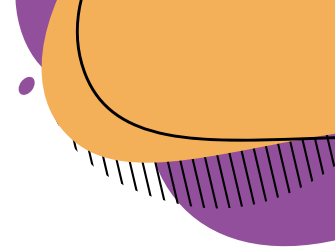
Finally, the Trainer will ask the participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs, therefore a sample is not shared.

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [Module on Hate Speech: Media Defence](#)
- [Media Against Hate Speech Training Module](#): European Federation of Journalists
- [Guide on Positive and Nonviolent Communication](#): Positive Psychology
- [Managing Conflict](#): Facebook Community
- [Digital Peacebuilding Communication Skills - Beyond Counter Speech](#): Lisa Schirch Toda Peace Institute
- [Introduction to Smart Politics](#) – Join Smart

Optional: Non-Violent Communication Games/Chatbots which can be shared with participants to practise NVC skills

- [Climate Conversation Chatbot](#) - simulating a conversation to find common ground on climate change discussions.
- [New York Times "Angry Uncle Bot"](#) - simulating how to have a productive conversation with a family member that you may not agree with politically (depending on the target group, it may not be helpful as it is focused on U.S. politics).



MODULE SIX:

Digital Safety



CORE MODULE INFORMATION:

Module Type: Phase 3 – Safeguarding digital communities

Module Objective: Improve digital safety skills and practices to mitigate the risk of violence in online communities.

Module Dilemma: I want to keep myself and my members safe.

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered physically but may be converted to a remote module with some customisation.



WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities (this link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes and information about how to make them). Note: Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files downloaded for backup (links are embedded in the above PPT and linked below, per session).
- Module 6 Specific Resources: Dilemma activity papers printed out or written out if the module is taking place in person ([Sample Dilemma Activity Printout](#)).

Session 1: Why is Digital Safety Important for Online Communities?



Session Objective: Understand the importance of and need for digital safety in online communities

The trainer will introduce Module 6 objective: to improve digital safety skills and practices to mitigate the risk of violence in online communities.

Session 1 will focus on the importance and need for digital safety in online communities. Session 2 will focus on the identification and understanding of digital safety risks faced by online communities.

Session 3 will focus on responding to digital safety risks and challenges faced by online communities.

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THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING AND DISCUSSION

Note for Facilitator: This activity was developed to take place in person. However, it can be altered to include two Menti questions if this is taking place online. If this activity is taking place in person, the trainer should prepare two sets of paper, numbered 1-5 (Sample Dilemma Activity Printout)

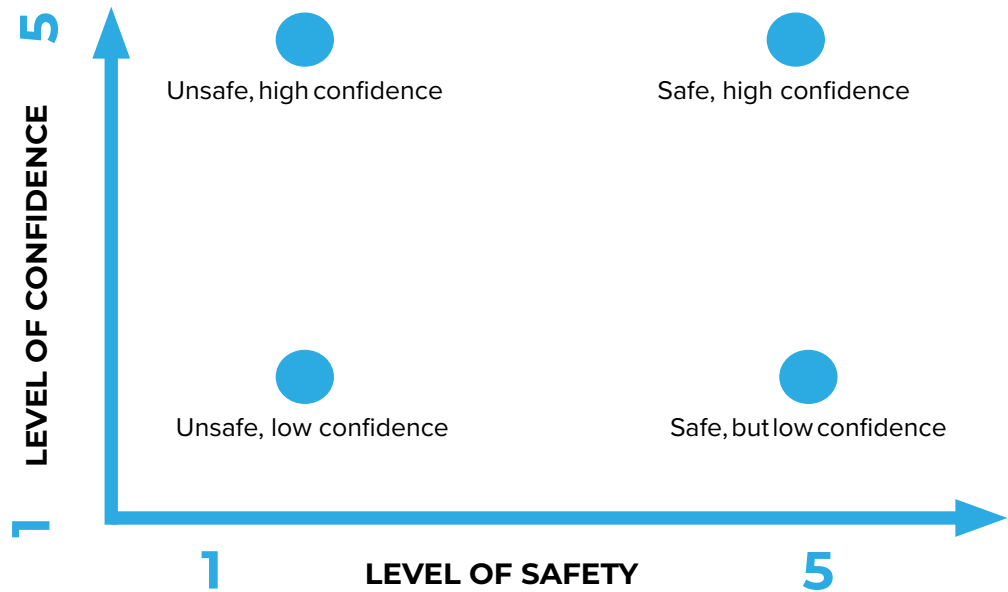
THE DILEMMA- A QUICK RATING

The trainers will begin the module by dissecting the module dilemma through a sharing exercise.

The trainers will ask participants to stand up and spread out across the space as they will be moving around the room for this activity.

There will be 5 pieces of paper (numbered 1-5) on the ground horizontally (for an X-Axis). The trainers will ask the following question: **How safe is the internet for your respective online community?** (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “least safe/secure” and 5 being “most safe/secure”. Participants will be asked to stand close to their respective numbers on the ground.

Next, the trainers will set down five pieces of paper (numbered 1-5) on the ground vertically (for a Y-Axis). The trainers will ask participants to rate themselves on a scale of 1-5: **How confident/equipped are you to utilise digital safety skills and practices?** , with 1 being ‘I’m not very confident or equipped’ to 5 being ‘I’m very confident and equipped.’ Participants will then move vertically and be situated somewhere on this continuum.



Based on the results from this activity, the trainers will get a sense of where the group of community stewards stands on their understanding of digital safety and their perceived ability to safeguard digital communities. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants why they picked these numbers. *What makes your group safe or unsafe? Why would you say you are equipped/ill-equipped and confident/unconfident to address safety concerns? Would you consider yourself sceptical or optimistic?* This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

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SAFETY AND ONLINE COMMUNITIES – A CASE STUDY

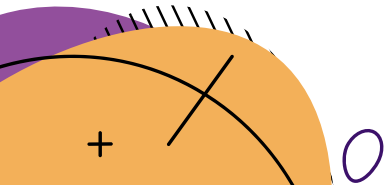
Before the trainers get into the digital safety risks and concerns about online communities, they will first dissect the importance of safety for online communities. As highlighted by the Governance Lab report, the following are some perspectives on why digital safety is important for groups:

- Research shows that safety, or the sense of being able to exist and express oneself without fear of judgement, is a prerequisite for participants in groups.
- Creating this sense of safety demands active management. This applies to social media groups as well.

The trainers will help the participants further dissect this by analysing a case study.

The following case study shows that leaders of online groups face particular challenges in balancing the maintenance of group identity, civil discourse, protection of members’ safety, and the need to respond to contemporary political and social events.

Note to Facilitator: The following cases/examples should be altered to best suit your country context and participant profiles. The examples below are samples but should be customised to suit your audience.



THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBAL SOCIAL ISSUES AND RISKS TO MEMBERS – HOW LEADERS RESPOND

In recent years, Facebook Group leaders have found themselves having to take positions on issues entirely unrelated to the subject of the group. For groups in many countries, not just the United States, this issue came to a head in mid-2020 after the police killing of unarmed African American George Floyd.

- The killing caused an outpouring of debate, and sometimes conflict, in Facebook Groups of all kinds. In the United States, leaders of Boss-Moms Facebook and a Billion Vegans, among others, deleted posts protesting the killing on the ground that the posts were irrelevant to the original purpose of the group. The leaders' position outraged many of the groups' members, who also pointed out that the groups had no moderators of colour.
- Facebook published guidance on how to talk about racial justice and urged groups to ensure that their admin and moderator teams were appropriately diverse and inclusive. As new groups, such as White People DOING Something., were formed to fight racism, older groups had to confront this issue. In Canterbury, Edd Withers and his fellow admins expressed solidarity with Black Lives Matter and personally contacted group members who made "White Lives Matter" or "All Lives Matter" posts, explaining why they thought these opinions were "problematic" at this time. The approach won some support but prompted others to leave the group. Many joined a sister group that discouraged political threads and promoted discussion on "positive topics."
- Subtle Asian Traits had always blocked overtly political content, instead favouring humorous memes about hyphenated Asian identity. But in June 2020, a group of 45 moderators held an emergency three-hour global call to discuss how to respond to the Floyd killing and whether it should allow Black Lives Matter content.

The above will be shared with the participants, after which the participants will discuss and answer the following questions.

What was the key issue these groups faced? Can you think of a social issue or particular incident that triggered such a reaction within your own group?

How did the leaders respond to the situation? How would you have responded?

What are some steps leaders can follow to avoid or better handle such situations in the future?

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WHY IS DIGITAL SAFETY IMPORTANT FOR ONLINE COMMUNITIES?

Trainers can encourage the participants to add more points to the following list.

1. **Communities – including online communities – seek safety.**
The various communities we belong to, including our family, friend groups, workplace, etc., need a sense of safety. We find it difficult to belong to and exist in communities that do not feel safe. Safety is not conditional. It is a right. Therefore, it must be available and accessible for all individuals regardless of whether the community is hosted on an online or offline platform.

It is also worth noting that Facebook defines ‘community’ as follows: “A collection of people in which they receive a sense of belonging, connection, and a feeling of safety.

2. **Online Communities are an alternative to individuals and groups that cannot host offline communities.**

While social media groups are often created due to the benefit of proximity and convenience, many community-based groups host themselves online as it is a safer alternative when compared to offline communities.

This preference is often influenced by local legislation. For example, in countries where abortions are banned, or homosexuality is criminalised, individuals might feel safer in a digital community than in a physical one.

As these communities, and the individuals who belong to these communities, are already vulnerable and at risk, it is crucial that these online communities are safe and well-protected.

3. **Online Communities are easier to attack than offline communities.**

Community-based online communities, especially ones such as the above, which discuss issues that attract scrutiny and judgement, can be at risk of attacks and smear campaigns. This could be through an individual or even another group that opposes the views, beliefs, and perspectives of the group.

While physical attacks might be rare and require coordination and effort, cyber-attacks are, unfortunately, easier to facilitate. Groups on social media platforms, including Facebook, are vulnerable to such attacks – especially when necessary digital safety mechanisms are not in place. This is why it is important for online communities to be aware of and follow the necessary digital safety mechanisms.

It is important to note that these attacks and retaliation can sometimes even be arbitrary and state-led violence. A good example of this is when three social media admins, including a journalist, were wrongfully arrested in Sri Lanka in May 2022 during the police protests and outrage (Note: trainers should seek to find an example from their context).

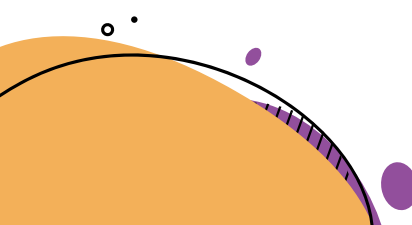
4. **Online Communities value privacy and anonymity.**

There are certain online communities, such as ones on Discord, that operate entirely anonymously. There are other online communities, such as ones on Facebook, that remain private. These decisions regarding privacy and anonymity are often made to safeguard the members as well as the overall interest of the online community.

If the privacy of the members is violated or even threatened, it can greatly affect their trust in the group and might even influence them to leave the group. This is why online communities must prioritise digital safety mechanisms that ensure the privacy and anonymity of the group members.

5. **Online Communities help individuals build resilience and confidence.**

When individuals become part of a safe space and trust the members within, they begin to develop a sense of belonging and emotional security. Rather than completely shielding individuals from the adverse effects of society, safe spaces can help individuals build the strength and confidence needed to confront discrimination and isolation in a supportive environment and allow them the opportunity to engage as their authentic selves.



Session 2: What are the Digital Safety Risks and Challenges Faced by Online Communities?



Session Objective: Identify and understand the digital safety risks faced by online communities.

Trainers will introduce Session 2 and its objective to identify and understand the digital safety risks faced by online communities.

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DISCUSSION - HOW SAFE IS MY GROUP?

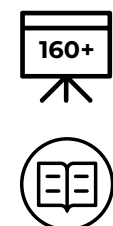
Note for Facilitator: Some of these points may be covered during the dilemma and discussion for Session 1. However, this is a useful point to discuss in more depth and see if participants can identify additional factors that contribute to risks and challenges in online group settings.

The trainers will then ask participants to discuss to better understand the level of safety and level of vulnerability of their groups. It is important for the participants to understand that the risks and challenges faced by social media groups depend on a number of factors. This includes:

- The size of the group
- The objective of the group
- Relevant local legislations
- Privacy settings of the group (including accessibility and visibility)
- The capacity of the admins/moderators.

The trainers will provide examples to elaborate on each of the above. Participants will be encouraged to add to this list. Each participant will be asked to cross-examine the vulnerability of their social media group based on the above factors. This will enable them to identify what areas need more work and what needs to be further strengthened in order to improve the safety and security of their group.

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COMMON FORMS OF DIGITAL VIOLENCE - ACTIVITY AND DISCUSSION

Note: It is intended to have a discussion section to be entirely participant-facilitated.



DISCUSSION

Before discussing the specific digital safety issues of social media groups, the trainers will facilitate a more general discussion. Note that there can be an overlap between the general risks faced by digital citizens in the overall platform and specific risks faced by social media groups.

The purpose of this section is to be aware of common risks and challenges faced by all digital citizens, not just those who exist in online groups and communities. The trainers will help participants understand various ways in which digital violence can manifest itself on social media platforms.

Some common forms of online violence include: cyber harassment, cyber stalking, image-based sexual violence, cyber grooming, impersonation, hacking, Doxxing, hate speech and disinformation can also be categorised as online violence.

Participants will be divided into pairs. Each pair must identify one form or manifestation of online violence. Once that is done, each pair must do a short presentation about their topic. The participants will be encouraged to make the presentations as creative as they would like.

The presentation must include the following information:

- *What is this form of online violence?*
- *How and why does it happen?*
- *Who does it affect the most?*
- *What are its consequences?*
- *How can people prevent it or be safe from it?*

Once all presentations are completed, the trainers will add more forms of digital violence to the existing list.

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WHAT RISKS AND CHALLENGES DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS?

Moving on to risks and challenges faced by admins and groups, it is important to note that researchers have also studied how certain safety factors can undermine incentives or discourage people from participating in online groups. In many cases, the risk of harm or loss of privacy can result in participation being disincentivised.

The following are six specific challenges the trainers will share with the group of admins.

Note: These challenges will be further dissected and elaborated, as time permits, through case studies, video materials, and examples from your local context.



1. **Polarisation**

Michela Del Vicario et al. (2016) studied how Facebook users formed echo chambers or groups isolated from the outside environment, which enforce members' existing behaviours and beliefs. The authors found that highly active users in those groups exhibited more negative emotions and that higher activity in these communities correlated with greater polarisation. Likewise, a study of political discussions on Twitter found that tweets that contained moral and emotional language spread more widely than those that did not, but that this diffusion was largely contained within each ideological group, which the authors argue "may partly explain increasing polarisation between liberals and conservatives (Brady et al. 2017)."

Trainers can show participants [this video](#) about how filter bubbles work and how this can lead to polarisation.

2. **Emotional Harm**

The risk of emotional harm affects both a person's decision to join an online group and their behaviour as a member. Some have studied how the emotional distress that some experience within online groups, for instance, due to cyberbullying or online harassment, can negatively impact their experience or even drive them off of social media altogether. Jon-Chao Hong et al. (2015) studied users' motivations to participate in Facebook communities and found that people with higher levels of general anxiety and social anxiety were less likely to continue participating in communities on the platform.

3. **Security**

An individual has to weigh the potential benefit of engaging with their online community against the risk that other community members, or the platform itself, may breach their expectation of privacy. This tradeoff intersects with social traits, such as gender (Fogel and Nehmad 2014). For instance, studies of social media use by young women in urban India have found that while participating in online communities that cross social boundaries can be empowering (Kumar 2014), many women have also experienced breaches of privacy both online (e.g. unsolicited messages from other users) and offline (e.g. stalking and sexual harassment) as a result of using social media (Karusala et al. 2019).

4. **Privacy**

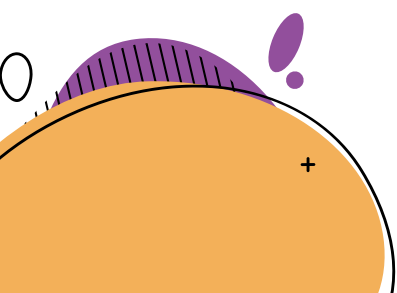
Information collection and sharing may now be so pervasive that privacy concerns are diminishing as a deterrent to participating in online spaces (Al-Ameen et al. 2020). Nusrat Jahan Mim and Syed Ishtiaque Ahmed (2020) studied the conflicts between the image-sharing culture of online social networks and the privacy that is expected within the home in urban Bangladesh. Rather than change their image-sharing practices, many participants actually modified the functions of rooms within homes to accommodate picture-taking, much to the dismay of family members who felt their privacy was being violated (Mim and Ahmed 2020). Another possible explanation is that it is difficult for individuals to make informed decisions about what to share when they are not aware of who is privy to the information they share, as is often the case on social media (Acquisti and Gross 2006).

5. Lurkers

Nu Sun et. al (2014) examined a variety of these factors in their study of lurkers or those who are members of online groups but do not actively participate. The authors pointed to a number of reasons for this behaviour, including environmental reasons (i.e. the social environment does not make posting easy), personal reasons (e.g. introversion), relationship reasons (e.g. a lack of intimacy in the group), and also reasons related to security and privacy.

6. Termination

While leaders have a great deal of control over their group's activities, it is social media that ultimately decides what is allowed to happen on its platform, including whether groups can exist at all. A fear that the platform could unilaterally remove their community, or require them to start paying, is common among many group leaders.



Session 3: Responding to Digital Safety Risks and Challenges Faced by Online Communities



Session Objective: Identify various tools and practices that can reduce the risk of and mitigate the impact of digital safety challenges faced by online communities

In this session, the trainers will inform the participants about three core digital safety practices that are crucial for social media groups: choosing the right privacy setting, using post approvals correctly, and using membership questions. These tools and practices can help mitigate the risk and impact of digital safety challenges in online communities.

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CHOOSING THE RIGHT PRIVACY SETTING

Choosing the right privacy setting for your group can depend on the type of group you have and the sensitivity of what's discussed in your group.

On Facebook, when it comes to visibility and accessibility, there are three key settings for the group:

- Make your group public if you want it to be easily found and if you want posts in the group to be visible to non-members.
- Choose the private but visible in the search setting if you want people to be able to search for and easily discover your group but keep posts visible to members only.
- Make your group private and hidden in search if you want to have the most restrictions over group visibility and want membership to be by invitation only. You may consider this if the group covers a sensitive subject.

The trainers will do a quick tutorial on how to activate and use the above privacy settings via admin tools.

A FEW KEY THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- Private groups with 5,000 or more members can't change their privacy to a public group.
- Groups are limited to one privacy setting change every 28 days.
- Admins who change their group's privacy will have a 24-hour grace period to change it back.
- All members of your group will get a notification that you have changed the group's privacy.
- Invited members are members of a group who can see the group in preview mode.
- When a Page joins a Group, there could be several admins on that Page. All of them can see and interact with posts and members of the group.

- If an admin of the group has added a third-party app, the app has access to posts and comments in the group.
- Third-party apps can't access who wrote posts and comments unless the app has been given permission by the author.

It is highly recommended to notify members of a privacy change in a post or group announcement several weeks beforehand to make sure members feel comfortable with the new privacy setting. If the privacy level of a group changes, all members of the group receive a notification of the change.

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USING POST APPROVALS

All posts from group members appear in your group by default unless you turn on the post-approval option. With post approvals, admins can review all pending posts within a group and must approve them before they appear. Experienced admins use post approvals for the following reasons:

- You're on holiday, and you can't moderate posts effectively.
- An inflammatory topic is taking the group away from its intended purpose.
- People post about the same thing over and over again.

Admins agree that whether or not you use post approvals can depend on the nature of the group. A supportive group, where members need to talk immediately and freely, might not want to use post approvals. A small family or friend group may not want to limit member participation in any way. A group that is about one specific topic may use post approvals as a way to prevent members from posting about something off-topic and unrelated.

On the rare occasions when group conflict occurs, admins recommend temporarily turning on post approvals until tensions have eased as a way to manage member conflict.

If you are going to use post approvals, be sure to review pending posts quickly to let members feel heard.

Trainers will hear an audio [statement](#) from a group admin who discusses how and why he uses post approvals.

The trainers will demonstrate how to use post approvals on Facebook. Also, if they are willing, trainers will also ask the present admins in the group who are familiar with post approvals to do the demonstration for the other participants.

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CREATING MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS AND GROUP RULES

Note: The trainers will also inform the participants about digital safety mechanisms they would like to know about (e.g. a quick refresher can be shared on reporting procedures of particular platforms). The information below is relevant mostly to Facebook groups but can be customised as needed.

The following link to the [Module 6: Session 3 Annex](#), contains information the trainers will share on digital safety for admins on WhatsApp and Telegram.



Trainers will first show [this video](#) where admins discuss why it's important to have membership questions.

When first setting up your group, you might invite close friends or people who share the same interests. As the group grows, the number of people asking to join increases. Experienced admins cite that prioritising and managing new member requests is an important part of making sure that new members are a good fit for the group.

Membership questions help you learn more about people who want to join your group by asking them up to three free-form questions. Only admins and moderators see the answers, which can be reviewed within the member request queue. Since membership in private groups is limited to people who were personally invited to join, membership questions are only available to groups in a public or private setting.

Membership questions can be as simple as “what do you hope to get out of the group?” to more detailed questions like “how do you feel you might be able to contribute to this group as a member?” Experienced admins recommend mentioning the group's rules in one of the questions, asking potential members to agree to read and abide by them once they join the group.

Once your group has grown, and you're receiving numerous membership requests, you may find using membership request filters helpful. With membership request filtering, you can select and sort predefined filters to apply to pending requests. These can be accepted or declined individually or in bulk. The list of pre-set filters includes location or gender, whether a person was invited by a current member, whether they are in other groups you manage, and more. This information is made available based on what that person shares on their public profile. Member request filtering is one of the time-saving screening techniques recommended by admins.

The trainers will demonstrate how to use ‘member request filtering’. Once that is done, all participants will be given a few minutes to either come up with the membership questions for their group or reevaluate and reframe the existing membership questions of the group based on the learnings from the training. Participants, especially those with similar groups and objectives, will be encouraged to support each other.

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SHORT DISCUSSION



Trainers can ask participants the following discussion questions: *Is there anything else that you do to respond to risks or challenges faced in your online community? Can you share an example of a time you responded to safety risks or challenges in your group? Is there anything you would change about the approach you took to address these concerns?*

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MODULE 6 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next, the Trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.

The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity; however, this is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot Quiz.

The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability. Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

Finally, the Facilitator will ask the training participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs, therefore a sample is not shared.

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [Navigating disinformation](#): UN Women
- [The power of virtual communities](#): Governance Lab
- [Understanding Privacy Settings](#): Facebook Community



MODULE SEVEN:

Digital Leadership



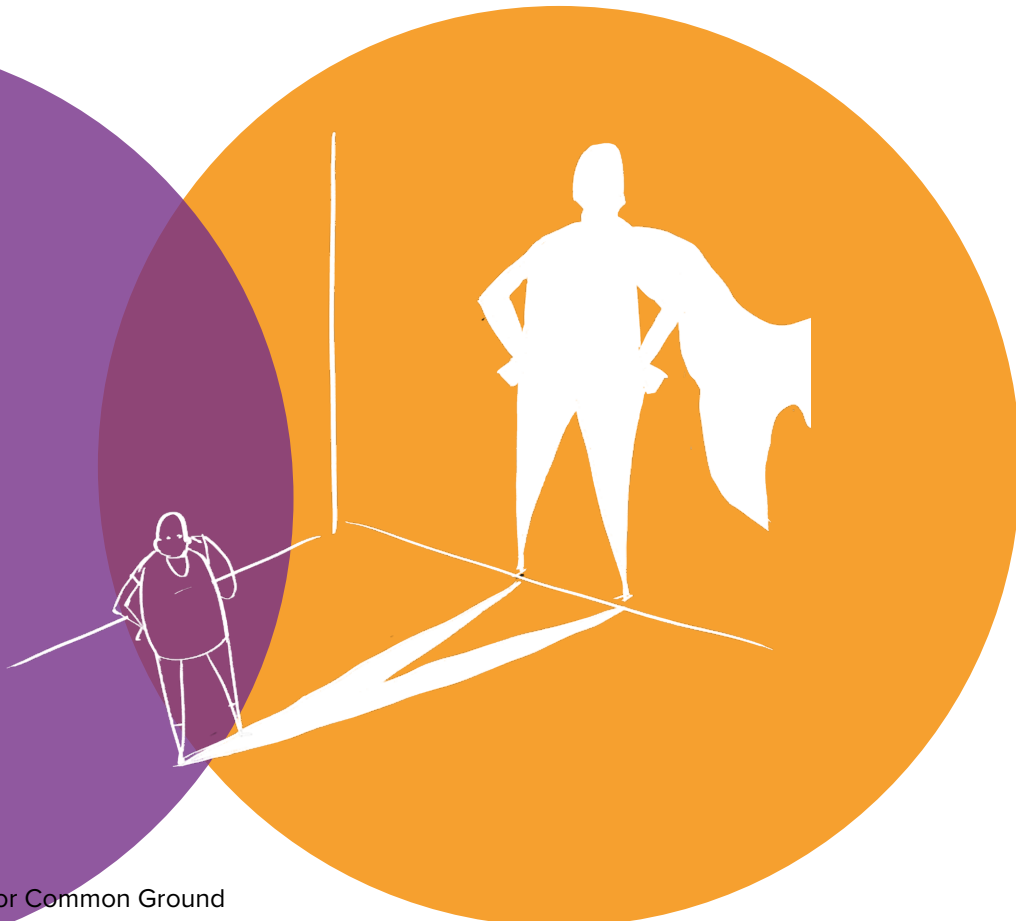
CORE MODULE INFORMATION:

Module Type: Phase 4 – Implementing effective leadership

Module Objective: Understand how to exercise multi-partiality and practice leadership in digital environments

Module Dilemma: I don't have the leadership skills and confidence to facilitate my group.

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered virtually, but may be converted to an in-person module with some customisation.



WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review [Content for Training Activities](#) for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities. This link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes and information about how to make them. Note: Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files downloaded for backup (links are embedded in the above PPT and linked below, per session).

Session 1: Who is a Digital Leader?



Session Objective: Discuss the characteristics and responsibilities of a digital leader and digital community steward.

The trainer introduces the objective of Module 7, to understand how to exercise multi-partiality and practice leadership in digital environments.

Session 1 will focus on the characteristics and responsibilities of a digital leader and digital community steward.

Sessions 2 through 4 will discuss how to be an efficient and effective digital community steward through key strategies, relying on your team, and self-care.

10
MINS



THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING

Trainer to screen-share and display the Mentimeter Dilemma Activity for Module 7

The trainers will begin the module by dissecting the module dilemma.

The trainers will use a scale on Mentimeter and share the following dilemma: *“I don’t have the leadership skills and confidence to facilitate my group.”*

Participants will be asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 the situation with their own group, with 1 being ‘I’m not very confident about my digital leadership skills’ to 5 being ‘I’m very confident about my digital leadership skills’.

Based on the results from Mentimeter, the trainers will get an average for the group of community stewards. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants what rating they gave their group and why they picked that number. This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

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MINS



RE-VISITING WHAT MAKES A DIGITAL COMMUNITY STEWARD: WORD CLOUD

Trainer to screen-share and display the Mentimeter Word Cloud Activity for Module 7.

WORD CLOUD (10 MINUTES)

Trainers will ask participants to revisit the discussion around digital community stewardship at the beginning of the training curriculum (Introductory Module). Without showing the responses, the trainer will present a blank word cloud *asking participants to list the traits of a digital community steward (or digital leader).*

The trainer will briefly show the previous answers and elaborate on the difference between the two discussions. Participants can be asked why they submitted certain responses. The trainer may also open some discussion on the question: *what differentiates a leader in the physical world, compared to the digital world?*

40
MINS



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: SELF REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: SELF REFLECTION

Next, the trainers will ask participants to spend about 10 minutes completing the chart individually. Participants will fill out their Strengths, Limitations, Opportunities and Challenges as digital community stewards. Participants will be asked to think of their individual strengths and limitations (in addition to their group's). Opportunities and challenges are usually external factors, but stewards can be asked to think about this in broad terms. Some guiding questions for this exercise include:

- *What are some of your strengths as a digital community steward?*
- *What are some of your limitations as a digital community steward?*
- *What are some opportunities to improve upon your group's goals? Or opportunities of having groups online?*
- *What are some of the challenges/risks of working with groups online? What are some of the risks or threats when working with your group online?*

Note to Facilitator: for the following activity, and if this training is in person, groups can assemble in different parts of the room. If taking place remotely, breakout groups should be created.



GROUP ACTIVITY & DISCUSSION

After spending some time to complete the situational analysis alone, the trainers will break the participants into groups of 4 or 5 in breakout rooms. Trainers should use their discretion to divide the participants into groups, but they could be grouped based on similar missions (e.g. if certain groups are working with marginalised groups, there may be more synergies in their situational analysis). The trainer will ask participants to think of a few points that are relevant for all groups. Groups will be given 10 minutes to discuss..

Next, the groups will quickly report back to the larger group, and the trainer will compile a list of common Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges to community stewards achieving their goals in their online community.



DISCUSSION

In the final 15-20 minutes of this activity, the trainer will open up a discussion for the participants. Participants will be asked to share *why they mentioned these points and elaborate on how good or bad leadership can impact these variables.*

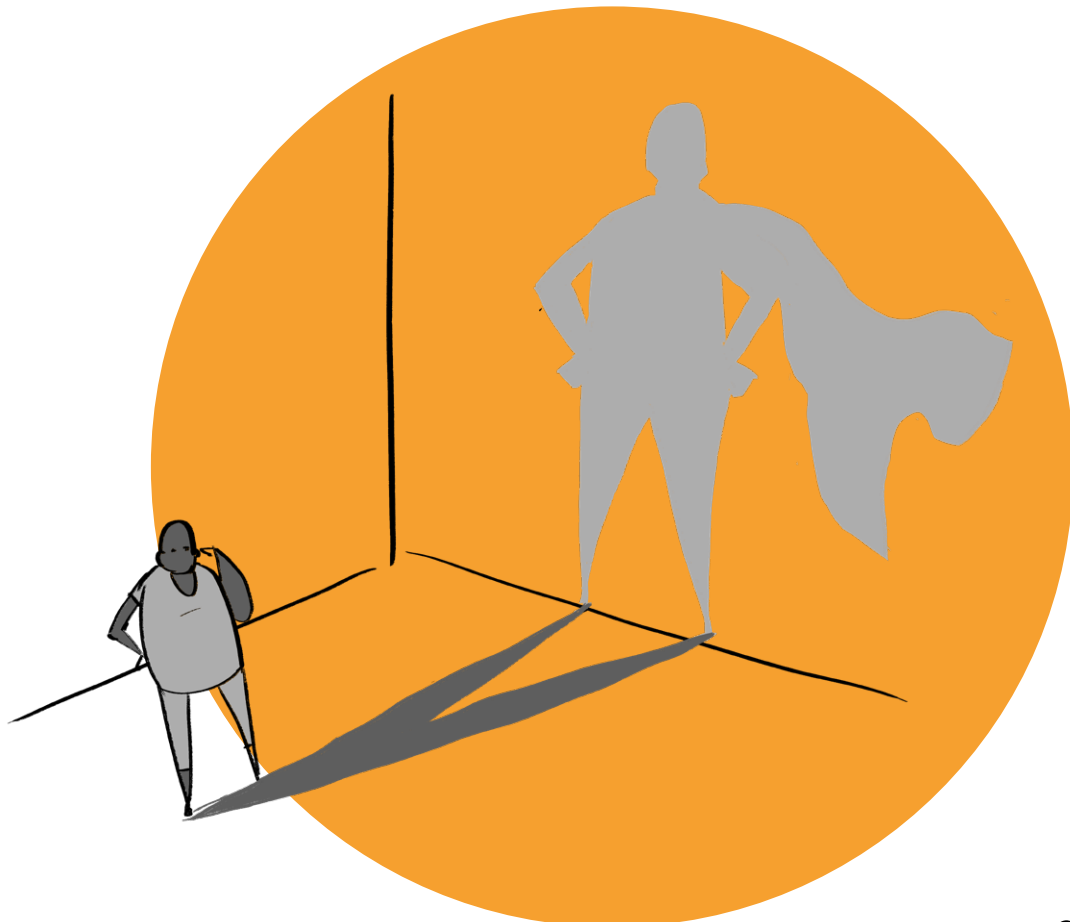
Some additional questions may be framed around the incentives and needs of a digital community steward. Here are some guiding questions for this discussion:

Incentives:

- *How did you become a community steward? What motivates you to be a community steward?*
- *What can social media companies (i.e. Facebook, Whatsapp, Youtube, etc.) do to motivate you or make it easier for you to promote social cohesion (e.g. trust and connection) across the groups you manage?*

Needs:

- *What do you need the most to be a successful community steward? (e.g. skills, confidence and effectiveness).*
- *What is the most important skill or tool you need that will enable you to promote trust and connection across your groups successfully?*



Session 2: Active Participation



30
MINS



Session Objective: Inform participants about the importance of active participation for effective and efficient digital community stewardship

EXPLANATION AND DISCUSSION: KEY STRATEGIES FOR DIGITAL COMMUNITY STEWARDS

Trainers will introduce the session on active participation for digital community stewards, highlighting the following:

CHOOSE MULTI-PARTIALITY OVER IMPARTIALITY.

Multi-partiality—developed as a facilitation technique—seeks to level power disparities between individuals while acknowledging the social identities and inequalities present. It asks participants to consider how their perspectives are influenced by their social and intersecting identities and how these identities influence group dynamics.

Intersecting identities is the concept that an individual's identity is composed of multiple intersecting factors, including but not limited to gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity, class, ability, religion, sexual identity and sexual expression.

The trainer can ask participants: *Who in your group seems to be most comfortable contributing to the conversation? What perspectives seem to be missing from the space?*

When these types of questions are asked, and the steward makes an active effort to be self-reflective, it creates room for both moderators and group members to share their own experiences and identities.



Overall, multi-partiality falls between impartiality and bias; it does not favour one opinion over another, nor does it completely remove the facilitator from the conversation. The trainers can show the participants [this brief video](#) on the subject.

Note: Multi-partiality and how it can be practised by digital community stewards will be further explored in the next module, which focuses on diversity and inclusion. Additionally, depending on time during this session, the trainer may go more into the theory and framework of intersectionality developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991).



DON'T JUST FACILITATE. REMEMBER TO PARTICIPATE.

Members appreciate it when you are involved as a fellow member of the group, not just as an admin. Being social and interacting with members lets them get to know you and helps build trust. Once you have established this trust, it's easier for members to feel comfortable coming to you with any questions or participating in the group themselves.

As an active admin, you can help encourage a positive group culture by modelling the type of behaviour you want to see in the group. Experienced admins mention that being active also allows you to notice positive and negative trends in the group. If you notice group members reacting positively to a post, you may want to encourage more of the same.

Members like to be recognised, even if it's just with a like or a short comment. Give members positive feedback by actively commenting and reacting to their posts. Acknowledge members and let them know you care.

Posting regularly (e.g. 1-2 times a week or more) lets your members get to know you. Depending on the platform you moderate, consider scheduling posts in advance, so you don't need to be online around the clock.

Note: If requested, here, the trainers will show the participants how to schedule posts on platforms such as Facebook or Instagram.



[Share this video](#) with the participants where digital community stewards talk about being active admins and participants.

Session 3: Relying on Your Team



Session Objective: Inform participants about the importance of getting support from and relying on their team

40
MINS



RELYING ON YOUR TEAM (40 MINUTES)

EXPLANATION



Rely on Your Team for Help:

Appoint moderators or admins so that each person can take a day off whenever they're feeling overwhelmed or a little stressed out with your workload.

Experienced admins often mention that running a successful group takes time and effort. Communities can break apart when an admin becomes drained or burnt out. When you feel overwhelmed, turn to your team members for help. Set up a schedule, divide responsibilities, and include days off for yourself and your team members. Trust your team to step in when you need to take a break.

Spend time training your team both to help manage the group and uphold the group's culture. Feeling comfortable with your team's decision-making abilities and commitment allows you to take needed breaks from your group.



DISCUSSION

Trainers can ask participants to share their experiences in this session. *Do you have experience working with other team members in your group? In what circumstances is it helpful? Have there been any challenges in working with others? How have you encouraged other admins/moderators to take ownership and be reliable?*



EXPLANATION

Find Moderators and Admins:

As your community grows, you may find yourself spending more and more time moderating your group. If you feel this way, you're not alone. It may be time to enlist some people to help manage your group.

You may find that certain members already help manage the group. Those members might post great content or comment on or tag you in posts/discussions that need moderation. They understand the culture of the group and feel like a part of the community. Admins we spoke to told us that the best moderators tend to reveal themselves in this manner, so reach out to them and see if they want to take on a more official role.

You can promote any member of your group to one of two roles: admin or moderator. Moderators have fewer permissions than admins, so they can help take some of the work off your plate without giving them more control than you're comfortable with.

Introduce new moderators or admins in a post, so members can get to know them personally and know who to tag in comment threads that need moderation. Additionally, admin and moderator badges help members quickly and easily identify these leaders. This transparency is also helpful in improving trust and connection in your group. Ideally, your moderators can monitor content and member activity while you're away from your group.



[Share this video](#) with the participants where digital community stewards talk about finding the right admins and moderators.



DISCUSSION

Trainers can ask participants to share their experiences here. *Do any stewards use multiple admins in their groups? What are the benefits? What are the challenges? How did you identify the right people? How did you build trust? Does it make your role and responsibilities easier?*

Session 4: Practising Self-Care



Session Objective: Share important self-care practices to promote wellness and avoid burnout among digital community stewards

30
MINS



PRACTISE SELF-CARE



ACTIVITY AND DISCUSSION

We will begin this session with a break. Participants will be given five minutes to take a breather. Once they come back, the trainers will introduce them to the session - and highlight that sometimes it's important to walk away and take a breather.

The trainers will then share a breathing exercise (perhaps even basic stretches) that the participants can practise - especially when they are using their phones or laptops.

This will be followed by a quick sharing activity. The participants will be asked to share something that brings them emotional support - especially when they are online. This could be anything. A cup of tea. A pillow. A playlist. A pet., etc.

The purpose of this activity is to show that we all need emotional support and that we all have different ways of comforting ourselves. (**Note:** if this activity is taking place remotely, the trainers can ask the participants to physically bring this emotional support item to the screen).

Once the activity and discussion are over, the trainers will dive into some additional strategies for practising self-care.



EXPLANATION

As an admin of a community, you're always "on". Conflict, questions, member requests, and constant drama can start to weigh heavily on your emotions, energy, and time. You love what you do, and your community truly wouldn't be the same without you, but it's okay to give yourself a break. Take a step back. Breathe. Recharge.

In the end, making time for yourself is going to help you manage your community better. Here are some tips from admins on how to unplug:

1. **Understand When You Feel Overwhelmed** – Do you ever feel like the weight of the world is on your shoulders and that all you can think about is putting out fires in your group? It can actually be exciting to rise to that challenge, but that's also when you can start to burn out. Learn to recognise burnout and when you feel it, know when to take a break.

There are many apps that can help us keep track of our moods and emotions. [Mood Meter](#) is one example the trainers can share with the participants.

2. **Walk Away** – When you feel anger or tension or are consistently drawn back into a problem, the first thing you can do is get up, walk away and turn off your notifications. Give yourself some time to disconnect and take a step back.

It might be hard to walk away from a problem when it feels like you're the only one who can solve it but looking after yourself is always worth it. The stress can wait.

3. **Identify and Address Sensitivities** – Notice the pattern. Do you feel overwhelmed with member requests? Are members messaging you? Are you dealing with conflict in your group?

Learn your triggers, sit with them and process them. You may be able to see a clear source behind your anxious or uneasy feelings. Identify which tasks you might need more help dealing with as well as which issues you may want to avoid entirely.

4. **Set Clear Expectations About Your Availability** – Do a Live with your group or have a pinned message to set expectations and limitations. This helps build empathy with your community and models behaviour for your own admin team.

Schedule your posts in advance to make your time off count. Create office hours that work for you and your team. No one should be expected to be on 24/7.

5. **Practise Self-Care** – When you feel yourself getting overwhelmed, think about the small things you can do to care for yourself. Maybe it's making yourself a cup of tea, going for a walk, playing with your pet or calling a friend.

Sometimes it's the little things that comfort you, and that can help you to let go of what's stressing you out. Getting offline is usually a great first step.

6. **Build a Trustworthy Team with Skills and Sensitivities that Complement Yours** – Empower your team to make decisions on your behalf. Consider an admin team located in different locales for better coverage day and night. When choosing team members, think about what they can do that you can't.

Having a strong network of skills and specialities will help you to distribute responsibilities and save your team from burnout.

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MINS

CREATIVE ACTIVITY



ACTIVITY - CREATIVE STEWARDSHIP

Trainers will ask participants to create a Meme or GIF that represents or defines who they are as a digital community steward (Or how they view digital community stewardship in general). Participants are encouraged to be creative and share their examples with the group. Note: For virtual meetings, they can share examples on the video conferencing chat or group chat and in-person meetings- on the training group chat.



ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITY (SELF-CARE QUOTES)

As an alternative activity: each participant may share a self-care quote in the chat box (or on a different platform chosen by the trainers). These quotes need to be self-written, a small piece of advice they wish to share with their fellow community stewards.

Note: if taking place in person, these small pieces of advice can be placed on sticky notes and shared on a larger flipchart for participants to see throughout the training.

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MODULE 7 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next, the Trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.

The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity; however, this is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

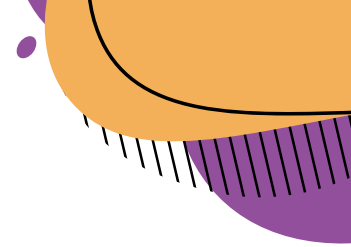
Note: See [Content for Training Activities](#) for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot).

The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability. Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

Finally, the Facilitator will ask the training participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs, therefore a sample is not shared.

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [Building a Team: Facebook Community](#)
- [The power of virtual communities: Governance Lab](#)
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. [Mapping the Margins](#). 1991.



MODULE EIGHT:

Growth & Inclusivity



CORE MODULE INFORMATION:

Module Type: Phase 5 – Co-creating bigger and more inclusive digital communities

Module Objective: Identify strategies to increase the size of the group while encouraging the group to be more inclusive

Module Dilemma: I want to expand the numbers and diversity of my group

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered virtually but may be converted to an in-person module with



WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review Content for Training Activities for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities. This link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes and information



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files downloaded for backup (links are embedded in the above PPT and linked below, per session).

Session 1: Growth - Expanding Membership



Session Objective: Discuss various tools and strategies to identify new members for an online community

Note for Facilitator: Groups that have very specific group memberships (e.g. based on a specific identity, a group that was formed during a project or event), or groups that already have a large membership base, may not need as much information on this topic. However, if the participants in this training are coming from diverse groups, the trainer may decide to encourage more discussion and peer-to-peer exchange, for a more dynamic discussion of lessons learned.

Trainers will introduce the Module and Session objectives.

- Module 8 Objective: Identify strategies to increase the size of the group while encouraging the group to be more inclusive.
-
- Session 1 will discuss various tools and strategies to identify new members for an online community.
- Session 2 will discuss branding and marketing and visibility of groups.
- Session 3, participants will learn to build and maintain diverse, inclusive communities by providing resources and safe spaces and lifting the voices of historically marginalised members.
- Session 4 will focus on how to co-create an inclusive community and enable diverse members to take ownership and participate.

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MINS



THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING

Trainer to screen-share and display the Mentimeter Dilemma Activity for Module 8

The trainers will begin the module by dissecting the module dilemma.

The trainers will use a scale on Mentimeter and share the following dilemma: *I want to expand the numbers and diversity of my group.*

Participants will be asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 the situation with their own group, with 1 being 'My group is not very diverse and inclusive,' to 5 being 'My group is very diverse and inclusive.'

Based on the results from Mentimeter, the trainers will get an average for the group of community stewards. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants what rating they gave their group and why they picked that number. This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

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MINS

A QUICK ZOOM POLL

Note for Facilitator: If this session is taking place in person, trainers can ask the following questions in person or create a poll on a platform like Menti or another app like PollEverywhere.

In this session, the trainers will introduce the participants to diverse strategies that can be useful in expanding groups on social media platforms.

Before discussing these strategies, the trainers will pose the following questions to the participants to understand their expectations and goals for their group. The following can be asked via a Zoom Poll or another platform that will allow the trainers and the participants to view the responses in a visual/graphical format.

- *What is the current membership (number) of your group?*
- *What are the current gender demographics of your membership?*
- *What is your membership expectation for the next few months (end of 2022)?*
- *What kind of changes do you want to see in your gender demographic in the future?*
- *What do you think is an ideal number for an online community? What is the minimum or maximum number?*
- *How many members do you think you (and your current team of admins/moderators) can handle?*

Based on the findings above, the trainers will facilitate a quick discussion. This will focus on where we are in terms of membership and where we see ourselves going. The objective of this session is to help us identify the relevant tools to bridge this gap.

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CROSS PROMOTING YOUR GROUP

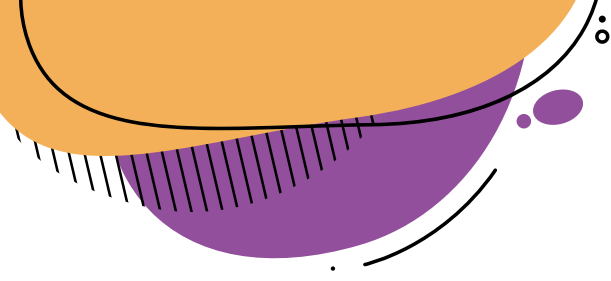
A great way to gain engagement, spread awareness, and attract new members is to cross-promote your group. This could mean building relationships with similar communities on Facebook or expanding your reach to other platforms.

BUILD A NETWORK:

Groups can help each other in a big way. Admins can share advice, resources, content, and even audiences – so building a network of like-minded group admins can put you way ahead of the curve.

First, consider where your community fits in the bigger ecosystem of groups. Are there other groups whose members and interests overlap with yours? Look around to see if others run similar or related groups and reach out. It can only help your community (and theirs)!

Connecting with people who are influential in the same space is an easy way to expand your audience. Most admins are eager to make new friends, and sharing each other's posts and events is one way to give your members content they'll love while amplifying your own message. You might not have an idea of how to work together right away. Just reach out and introduce yourself!



Here the trainers can ask the participants if any of them collaborate with other groups with similar objectives. Participants can share their experiences and discuss the pros and cons of this strategy.

The trainers can also introduce the participants to opportunities that will help them access other group admins. This includes programs such as [Community Connect](#), [Power Admin Groups](#), [Learning Labs](#), and [Accelerator](#) (Source: [Facebook Community](#)). The trainers will provide a small brief about each of these programs (supported by Meta) so the participants can further develop their skills and build their networks as admins.

PROMOTE YOUR GROUP ON OTHER PLATFORMS:

Many admins use platforms such as TikTok and Instagram to cross-promote their group. Instagram can be a new way to engage potential members with its own hashtags, influencers, and tools. Starting an Instagram for your community is another exciting way to expand your group's reach. The same goes for TikTok! It is important to diversify the platforms we use since it will help us diversify our members too.

See if there's someone in your community who is savvy about using these platforms and ask for their help setting up a profile for your group! If you have photos or other awesome visuals from your group, share them – just make sure you get proper permission before reposting.

Be sure to add a call to action and link to your group from your new profiles – it could be something like “To join us in our group, hit the link in bio!” You can also set up takeovers from community members around the world or “influencers” in your space. The trainers can ask the participants if they use another platform to promote their group. This could be a social media platform – or perhaps even a website! This experience sharing can be inspiring for the participants to diversify their platforms.

CREATE A FACEBOOK PAGE TO USE AS THE PUBLIC FACE OF YOUR GROUP:

Some admins recommend creating a Facebook Page to help promote your group, especially if your group is a private group. These admins use a Page to spread the word about their group and give prospective members a sense of the group's culture. Examples of what you could share on a Page include upcoming public events your group has organised, achievements like successful fundraisers or articles related to your group's subject matter.

A Page can also help you vet potential members. People who have seen your Page before joining your group might have a better sense of whether the group is a good fit for them. By reading people's comments on your Page, you may be able to tell which individuals are a good fit for your group, too. You can link the Page to your group so people can easily request to join, or you can proactively invite new members you've seen commenting on the Page.

If you have multiple groups, you can link them all and use your Page as a hub. Moreover, using a page also means that you can boost your posts or create ads on both Facebook and Instagram - which is an effective way to get your community seen across the platforms.

Trainers will share [this audio testament](#) from a group admin who shares her experience of using a page to promote her group.

If requested, the trainers can also demonstrate how to create a Page – and how this page can be linked to the Group.

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MINS



A NOTE ON ORGANIC GROWTH

It may seem challenging to find new members for your group at first. Many successful groups started out small and gradually increased their membership.

If you are starting a group about a topic you are passionate about, you might already know some people who share that passion. Get them involved early and encourage them to actively participate and invite others to the group.

Experienced admins mention that committed members will often invite others to join the group if interested. If new members invite people, your group can grow fast. All the admins we have spoken to told us that word-of-mouth is a great way to grow your group.

To enable word-of-mouth growth, you'll need to encourage the creation of great posts and foster a sense of community. The type of content created and the value people receive from the group will vary depending on the type of group you run.

Public, content-driven groups can grow by encouraging members to post great content in the group. Members will share popular group posts to News Feed to share with their friends. Those friends can request to join the group to see more content.

Smaller, closed groups may not have posts shared with others outside the group. The value of this kind of group is in its supportive community.

Creating a welcoming, positive community empowers members to want to get the word out about their experience, whether it be to let people know about the group's great content, its supportive community, or both.



The trainers can also share [this video](#) of group admins discussing the importance of organic growth.



Session 2: Growth - Branding your Community



Session Objective: Discuss branding and marketing and visibility of groups using: visual branding, mission statements, keywords and tags, and other marketing/advertising strategies.

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MINS



BRANDING YOUR COMMUNITY VISUALLY

The trainers will begin this discussion with a quick activity.



ACTIVITY

The participants will be introduced to an online platform (such as Canva, google slides etc.) where they will be asked to design a logo for their group. Admins who already have a logo can either recreate it to the best of their ability – or even experiment with the design and try to create a new one! Participants who wish to draw the logo can do it in a notebook, too (especially if in person). Once the participants are done, they can share their logos through their cameras/screens. Trainers can inquire why participants made some of the designs regarding theme/tone/colour/images.



EXPLANATION

A great way you can reinforce your brand and create a familiar space for members is with visuals. Use a consistent colour palette, choose cover photos that reflect your purpose, and think about your logo. Logos can represent your members, the community's purpose, and how you want to express your group mission visually to the world.

Some groups change their cover photo each month based on community suggestions, polls, contests, or submissions. When in doubt, ask your members! How do they view the community? Giving options instead of making them open-ended will help to provide structure.



VIDEO

Trainers can share [this video](#) where group admins discuss the importance of branding for social media groups.

Quick Tutorial (Optional) - Trainers, if requested, can also show the participants how to use the colour and cover photo features available for Facebook groups.

10
MINS



BE UNIQUE AND CREATIVE



EXPLANATION

Everybody wants to be a part of something special. By cultivating inside jokes, catchphrases and nicknames, you can reinforce a sense of community and culture.

Give your community members a nickname that they can connect with and reinforce it in your posts. Make them feel like they're part of a community, but don't force it – keep it authentic to your brand and involve the community as much as possible.

Example from an admin: "In my community, we refer to each other as GGIs (Girls Gone International) - this brings us together around a shared identity."

By utilising symbols, emojis and catchphrases, you can bring members together and encourage participation. Start by thinking of an image or symbol that represents your community and encourage members to use it by using it in your posts.

Example: "In Girl Gone International, our symbol is a woman with a suitcase. We use that imagery in our logo and also think of emojis that might capture our community's brand (we often use a world emoji 🌍 or female dancer 💃 to show our personality as a brand)."



QUICK ACTIVITY

The trainers can ask the participants to identify emojis (by sharing via Zoom chat/or a preferred messaging platform) that they can use to brand and promote their group and its mission. Examples include Girl Gone International 🌍💃, and Search for Common Ground 🌍🕒🤝

Note: They can also be encouraged to identify hashtags, catchphrases, and acronyms, too, if time allows.

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MINS



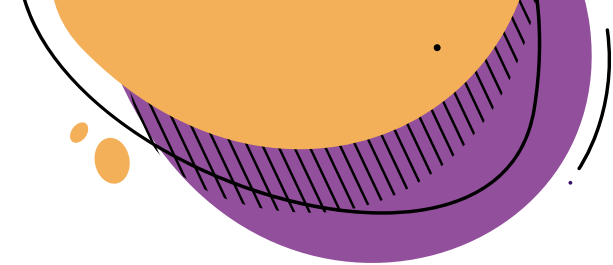
DEFINE YOUR MISSION



EXPLANATION

Every group has a purpose – a reason for existing. By writing a formal mission statement, you decide your purpose and what you and your members stand for. You can post your mission publicly or use it within your team to guide whether a decision is right for the group. Even if you don't write it down at all, it's useful to think about!

To create a mission statement, take a few minutes and write down what your group is all about. Why did you create it? What do you hope people will use it for? What do you hope it will give people? Now write that down.



One way to create your mission statement is to use the following template:

"[YOUR COMMUNITY'S NAME] is a group for [WHO ARE YOUR MEMBERS] that [WHAT YOU DO] and want to [YOUR VISION]."

Example of a mission from a group admin:

"Girl Gone International is a group of women, living, loving, and travelling abroad that want to connect with globally minded international women around the world online and face-to-face."



ACTIVITY -

The trainers can give the participants a few minutes to develop a mission statement for their group – or to reevaluate parts of their existing statement. Similar to the approach taken when they developed the 'group rules', it is important for admins to include the opinions and perspectives of their group members when finalising the mission statement. When we are emphasising inclusivity, member participation in the mission statement creation is really important. Therefore, the trainers will encourage the admins/moderators to have the members vote (perhaps through a quick poll). Remember to allow for suggestions rather than simply posting the mission statement without including the member's perspectives.

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INCREASING VISIBILITY WITH KEYWORDS AND TAGS

EXPLANATION-



Make your group easy for people to find with keywords and tags.

It is recommended to use popular words related to your group's subject matter in your group's name since potential group members might search for those common terms. For example, a parenting group might want to include "parents," "moms" or "dads" in their group name. This will help interested people find your group when searching for those words on Facebook.

Here the trainers can ask the participants if any of them have changed the group name since they established the group. If yes, the participants can share their experience regarding this decision: What was the old name? What's the new name? Did this change make the group more visible and accessible?

Note: Consider using group tags to make your group easier to find. Location tags help people search for and discover groups that are relevant to their area. Trainers can also do a quick demonstration to show how to activate group and location tags on Facebook.

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MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Advertise your group offline with unique pieces of merchandise. Create t-shirts, cups, stickers, or other items and include your group's name and information about the group. Some admins reward top contributors by offering a t-shirt or sticker as a surprise gift.

Some admins leave business cards, flyers, or other items with interested people at local events, trade shows, or conventions. Wear a shirt with your group's name, logo, and other information when attending events, as a conversation starter. You can encourage people to join your group right away or have a sign-up sheet and contact interested people later.

Reach out to businesses related to your group's theme to see if they'd be interested in partnering with your group.

Here, the trainers can ask the participants if any of them use such merchandise or collaborate with businesses to further promote their group.



Session 3: Diversity and Inclusion in Digital Communities



Session Objective: Learn to build and maintain diverse, inclusive communities by providing resources and safe spaces and lifting the voices of historically marginalised members.

Note for Facilitator: In this session, the trainers will focus on three key areas to discuss the topic of inclusion and diversity in social media groups. In each area, the trainers will discuss and share strategies as well as platform tools to help implement these strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Session Objective: To learn to build and maintain diverse, inclusive communities by providing resources and safe spaces and lifting the voices of historically marginalised members.

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INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION - 20 MINUTES



EXPLANATION

Inclusivity

Inclusivity is about making people feel valued, and a part of something. This includes changing practices that might unfairly benefit any one group, and making sure everyone feels they have the same access to opportunities and resources to participate, advance and make an impact.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)

- Diversity - is the representation of various identities and differences
- Equity- focuses on fair treatment - and equal access to resources.
- Inclusion- is the active engagement of the contributions and participation of all people.

DEI Questions

- Diversity asks, "Who is in the room?"
- Equity asks, "Who is trying to get in the room but can't?"
- Inclusion asks, "Have everyone's ideas been heard?"



DISCUSSION



What is Digital Inclusion?

The trainers will begin the discussion by asking the participants, in their groups, to identify essential components of digital inclusion. *What must the digital world offer to improve inclusivity?*

The following are some key traits you can add to the discussion:

1. Affordable, robust broadband internet service
2. Internet-enabled devices that meet the needs of the user
3. Access to digital literacy training
4. Applications and online content are designed to enable and encourage self-sufficiency, participation, and collaboration.

What is Digital Exclusion?- Once the trainers facilitate the discussion on what digital inclusion is, and why it's important, go back to the Mentimeter to create another Word Cloud. Participants will be asked to *identify groups or communities that struggle to be included and are often excluded in digital communities.*

Some additional communities that the trainer may share, if not addressed in the word cloud: women and girls, gender and sexual minorities, Religious and ethnic minorities, Individuals with disabilities, and people living in poverty.

Once the participants complete the activity, the trainers will share the word cloud and identify which communities are most likely to experience digital exclusion. Based on the findings, the trainer will encourage discussion, asking participants the following guiding questions:

- *Why is this community included online?*
- *What are some common forms of digital exclusion and digital challenges faced by this community?*

Note: Trainers should also facilitate a discussion on intersectional exclusion, where individuals with multiple vulnerable identities face a higher risk of exclusion online (especially if they have not introduced concepts of intersectionality and intersecting identities in the earlier modules).

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DESIGN JUSTICE – ACTIVITY AND KEY PRINCIPLES

EXPLANATION



The trainers will begin the discussion by introducing the participants to the concept of Design Justice.

Design Justice rethinks design processes, centres people who are normally marginalised by design, and uses collaborative, creative practices to address the deepest challenges our communities face.

It is an approach to design that is led by marginalised communities and that aims explicitly to challenge rather than reproduce structural inequalities. It has emerged from a growing community of designers in various fields who work closely with social movements and community-based organisations around the world. Design justice takes the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion a step further when designing tech solutions, physical products but also social movements, and community development endeavours.



ACTIVITY

Here, the trainers will ask the participants to complete the following chart (displayed in the PPT slides to the left). Participants will be asked to self-reflect on their online group. *What groups/identities are involved? Who is benefitting from the work of this group? Who is harmed/or not benefitting?*

This activity helps admins understand whether these strategies and solutions we seek to promote inclusivity are beneficial or actually harmful for those we seek to protect. In addition, it also helps us understand whether the communities and people we are trying to include are represented, heard, and valued in the design and decision-making process.



FURTHER EXPLANATION

The following are some key principles design justice focuses on when developing and designing solutions for communities. It is highly important for digital community stewards to be aware of and practise the following principles when designing solutions and introducing strategies to their online communities:

- We use design to **sustain, heal, and empower** our communities, as well as to seek liberation from exploitative and oppressive systems.
- We **center the voices of those who are directly impacted** by the outcomes of the design process.
- We **prioritize design's impact on the community** over the intentions of the designer.
- We view **change as emergent from an accountable, accessible, and collaborative process**, rather than as a point at the end of a process.
- We see the role of the **designer as a facilitator rather than an expert**.
- We believe that everyone is an **expert based on their own lived experience** and that we all have unique and brilliant contributions to bring to a design process.
- We **share design knowledge and tools** with our communities.
- We work towards **sustainable, community-led, and -controlled** outcomes.
- We work towards **non-exploitative solutions** that reconnect us to the earth and to each other.
- Before seeking new design solutions, **we look for what is already working** at the community level. We honour and uplift traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge and practices.”



DISCUSSION

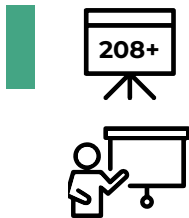
The trainers can invite participants in for a discussion about design justice, asking them *if they have any ideas about how to implement some of these design justice principles in their digital community.*

Session 4: Co-Creating Inclusive and Safe Communities



Session Objective: Learn to co-create an inclusive community and enable diverse members to take ownership and participate.

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CREATING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

EXPLANATION

An inclusive community is one that champions members from all backgrounds, provides a safe space for them to share their experiences and encourages them to learn from one another.

Remember, diversity is applicable, no matter what your group is about — even if it is a female-only community, hyper-local, or already a community where diverse identities come together, there are many ways that your members differ. Trainers should ask participants to *think about who their members are and the intersectional identities they represent*. Some examples are gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

Here are the main ways through which stewards can create an inclusive community.

Make inclusion and diversity a part of your values and statements:

Your group values are the foundation of your community. This is where you express your group's purpose, what you value and what you and your members stand for. Having strong values can help guide your members and shape the culture of your community.

When considering how your community supports diversity and inclusion, you can start by looking at how you express this in your group statements. Think about the different places where you share your values and purpose — this could be your group description, group rules, onboarding materials and anywhere you speak to members.

When describing who your members are or what your group does, you can add in relevant ways that you support diverse voices. The trainers can ask the participants to revisit their mission statements and group rules to see if these reflect the values of diversity and inclusion.

Make your branding and imagery inclusive:

Visually representing your community is important to communicate your mission and who your members are. Showcasing the diversity of members in your community's cover photo, logo, and all of your group's imagery can help communicate who your community is.

Some ways you can do this are through:

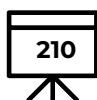
- **Illustrations** - Illustrations are often the easiest way to represent your members and community’s diversity. Look inside your community to see if there are artists or if they have referrals or recommendations. You can also check out Canva or Adobe Stock for illustrations you can use in your designs.
- **Photography** - Photos can help to show real members of your community. You can ask members to submit photos of themselves and other members or use images from events. Make sure to always get permission from everyone in the photo before you share it!
- **Text and other graphics** - There are many more ways to represent your community’s members visually. You can create maps to show where members are from, showcase imagery that is representative of their backgrounds or the languages they speak, and more.

You can even rotate your community’s imagery every month and ask members to share important dates to celebrate, like Pride Month, Black History Month, International Women’s Day, Indigenous Peoples Day — the list goes on! You and your community can use imagery to celebrate your members’ diversity and learn how they want to be represented.

Here are some tools the trainers can share and promote to implement the above strategies:

- **Cover photo** - Your cover photo is a great place to highlight your group’s brand. Choose an image or logo that represents your community.
- **Messenger** - Messenger can help to keep your team connected. You can use chat to escalate issues, share best practices and stories from the community, and work together to build your community.
- **Messenger Rooms** - Messenger Rooms is a great way to get your team together to talk through important topics with your community.

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PROMOTING INCLUSION IN YOUR COMMUNITY



EXPLANATION

You have a thriving community filled with diverse voices, perspectives, experiences, stories, learnings, and so much more. Sharing the voices of your community and creating space for members to feel seen and be referred to in the proper way can provide insight to many of your members and strengthen their bonds.

Here are the main ways through which you can promote inclusivity within your community.

Ask your members to self-identify by sharing pronouns:

As an optional membership question, you can ask members to self-identify by sharing their pronouns (ex., she/her, they/them). This can help set the tone in your community for everyone to be correctly addressed. You can include this in your Welcome Post with new members and set the tone by sharing more about yourself; this could be where

you are from, your pronouns, and other information you are comfortable sharing.

Again, this is an optional opportunity for your members to share more about themselves if they choose, so representing that in your question is important (ex. "Optional: Would you like to let us know your pronouns?"). Keep in mind that this is very personal, so making it optional to share is important. Ensuring that your community members are in a safe space and will be protected is also key. Again you want to make sure you are setting a tone for inclusion and not exposing your members to harassment.

Highlight diverse stories from within your community:

Learning more about your members and sharing with the rest of the community is a great way to create bonds and help members find others that they identify. Highlighting diverse stories from within your community, i.e. "Spotlight/story/member of the week" posts can bring your members closer together and get them excited to learn more about each other.

Think about members who are of different races and ethnicities, sexual orientations, genders, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, or people with disabilities.

Ask members to nominate each other or check your "Top Contributors" in your "Insights" tool to get started! At the end of your spotlight, you can ask, "Who would you like to nominate for the next spotlight?" This can also include your community's allies.

Here are some tools the trainers can share and promote to implement the above strategies:

- **Member questions** - Setting up member questions can give your members a chance to share their pronouns and helps set the tone of your community.
- **Welcome post** - Welcome posts can help you set the tone for your members, sharing their pronouns and creating a space where members can connect.

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PROVIDING SAFE SPACES FOR DIVERSE MEMBERS OF YOUR COMMUNITY



EXPLANATION

Your community is a place where people are coming together to share, build and have conversations. As with every community, it is important to have all voices represented and heard. As a community leader, you can help create a place where your members feel safe to share their experiences openly.

Here are the main ways through which we can provide safe spaces for the members of your community.

Creating strong rules with strict moderation

As digital community stewards know the importance of rules and guidelines for their communities It is important to have clear and strong rules against hate speech, misinformation and discrimination. However it is important to realise that these rules can be interpreted in many different ways. Be sure to do research and know your target audience before posting strong rules.

For example, “All Lives Matter.” This seems like an innocuous way of expressing that everyone should be considered when talking about rights. But this is disrespectful to members of the Black community. Proclaiming that “All Lives Matter” negates the “Black Lives Matter” movement and experience of Black people. There are many ways that this can be explained to community members, and resources can be shared with infographics, analogies, etc. Negating the experience of others is not providing a safe space for those members of your community.

Strong rule enforcement for inflammatory language is important when creating a safe space for important conversations. As we approach things with empathy, it can be challenging to strike a balance between what is an “education” moment and what is a “delete and ban this person” moment. Admins often employ a strike system for members, automatic deletion, muting of members, and/or posting themselves to address certain violations.

Listen to your members through continuous feedback

Listen to your members! How can you improve? How can you create a better community for everyone to connect? How can you make your community the best possible community for your members?

Send out surveys! There are many, simple, anonymous survey platforms (such as Survey Monkey and Google Forms) you can find to ask your members about themselves, what you can improve, what issues can be addressed, what rules can be better enforced, and what changes to your mission can be made. Make it a point to do these often - some admins do them every three-six months (ex., mid-year, end of year). You can even do these around major cultural moments (ex., BLM movement, COVID-19, elections) to understand how you can address the needs of your members through these times.

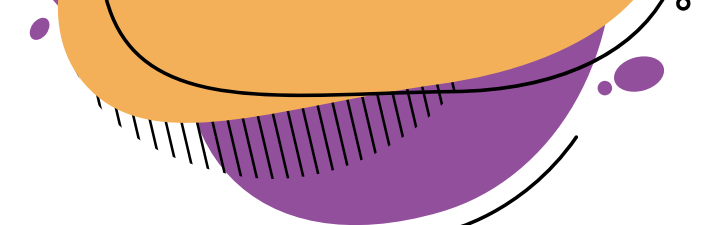
When discussing topics such as inclusivity and safety, admins need to be self-aware of the power they hold and exercise over these online communities. This is why listening and reflecting are essential to make members feel valued and heard. As a community leader and member, you are there to listen as much as you are there to share. Being an active member of a community is often about learning, listening, implementing, and sharing what you’ve learned.

Remember that member feedback and active listening are crucial in improving trust and overall group dynamics!

Educate yourself and provide mentoring and support when possible

Helping to educate yourself and others with reputable resources on topics like anti-racism, discrimination against minorities, the history of oppressed groups, immigration policies, etc., is the first step toward creating a healthy dialogue. Use your voice to share information, resources, organisations, and places to donate, and educate others on how they can do the same. Providing a safe space for fellow community members to interact and share their diverse experiences is an important part of leading and interacting in communities. Lifting the voices of your fellow community members and calling out discriminatory and disrespectful behaviour is our obligation as community members and allies.

Many communities are dedicated to a certain interest, identity or stage of life. Working with other communities (whether within the same ecosystem or on a different topic) can help to bring a richer experience to you and your members. Reach out to other community leaders or influential people in your space and ask them to join your community for a panel, interview or more! Remember, this is a collaboration, so be open and frame your ask in a way that is reciprocal. Creating bonds with other community



leaders can help both of your communities.

Here are some tools the trainers can share and promote to implement the above strategies:

- **Rules enforcement** - Rules enforcement lets you inform your members of the rule they violated. This can be done through Admin Tools when you are muting a member or approving posts.
- **Turn off commenting** - Sometimes, a post's comments can become unproductive. You can turn off the comments to prevent additional comments to the thread. It also helps to let your community know why you are turning off the comments.
- **Keyword alerts** - When you want to keep an eye out for when certain words or phrases are used in your group or quickly receive notifications about it, you can set up Keyword Alerts using these phrases, admin team names, or hashtags that you use for members to self-moderate.
- **Polls** - Polling your members is a great way to learn what matters most to your community and get suggestions. For example, you can poll your members on how you can help support diverse businesses or ask for feedback or ideas on how to continue to support diverse voices.

In addition, trainers can also share resources for admins regarding [‘how to be an ally in your community’](#) and [‘how to approach conversations around race in your community’](#).

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MODULE 8 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next, the Trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.

The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity, but is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

Refer to: [Content for Training Activities](#) for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot.

The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability. Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

Finally, the Trainer will ask the participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs, therefore a sample is not shared.

The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [Growing Your Group](#): Facebook Community
- [Diversity & Inclusion](#): Facebook Community
- [Design Justice](#): Design Justice Network





MODULE NINE:

Digital Rights



CORE MODULE INFORMATION:

Module Type: Phase 5 – Co-creating bigger, safer, and more inclusive digital communities

Module Objective: Understand and reinforce digital rights to respect freedom of expression and discourage hate and harassment.

Module Dilemma: I want to respect freedom of expression, but also want to protect my members from harm.

Module Delivery: This module was developed to be delivered virtually but may be converted to an in-person module with some customisation.



WHAT IS NEEDED IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MODULE:

- Facilitators should review this Module in detail and customise the content to suit their participants, as needed (including adding case studies/examples relevant to your region or country).
- Facilitators should prepare notes for each activity. While this guide provides some discussion points and explanation as a base, further explanation at times will be needed (and participants may ask clarifying questions, so the facilitator should be well prepared).
- Review Content for Training Activities for a list of general training materials and module-specific activities. This link includes sample questions for Menti questions and Kahoot quizzes and information about how to make them. Note: Before the training, be sure to have these activities prepared.



MATERIALS

- Powerpoint slides (linked to sample PPT slides)
- Links to videos and MP4 files downloaded for backup (links are embedded in the above PPT and linked below, per session).

Session 1: Community Standards - What do we need to know?



Session Objective: Discuss the range and importance of community standards relevant to the groups and platforms.

Note for Facilitator: In this Module, we also have a session dedicated as a concluding reflection. The Digital Rights Module nicely brings together some of the major themes addressed throughout the training, so we felt it was a good place to conclude the training (rather than creating an additional Conclusion Module). Facilitators can align with this method or develop a different conclusion in case not all modules are utilised for your purposes.

The trainers will begin by introducing the Module objective: to understand and reinforce digital rights to respect freedom of expression and discourage hate and harassment.

The sessions will be introduced:

Session 1 is: Community Standards - What do we need to know?

Session 2 is: Digital Rights - What do we need to know?

Session 3 is: Reflecting on digital rights and standards, and the responsibility of digital community stewards. This session can also serve as a conclusion to the curriculum.

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THE DILEMMA – A QUICK RATING

The trainers will begin the module by dissecting the module dilemma.

The trainers will use a scale on Mentimeter and share the following dilemma: I want to respect freedom of expression, but also want to protect my members from harm.

Participants will be asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 the situation with their own group, with 1 being 'I'm not very aware of digital rights that apply to my group members, including myself' to 5 being 'I'm very aware of digital rights that apply to my group members including myself'.

Based on the results from Mentimeter, the trainers will get an average for the group of community stewards. The trainers can also ask a couple of participants what rating they gave their group and why they picked that number. This activity will help us understand how relatable and relevant this dilemma is for the participants.

Note for Facilitator: This session focuses on community standards of Meta, as a majority of digital community stewards moderate and manage Facebook groups, WhatsApp groups, and Instagram pages. The latter session focuses on broader digital rights that are applicable to all online communities. However, if training participants are using other platforms, the trainer should consider altering this section to suit their needs and to explain community standards on other platforms like Signal, Telegram, or WhatsApp.

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COMMUNITY STANDARDS- A QUICK GAME

Trainer to screen-share and display the Mentimeter for Community Standards Game.

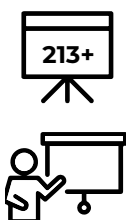
There are 22 community standards in total.

The objective of this game is for the participants to identify as many community standards as they can within 3 minutes.

The trainers will set a timer and ask the participants to write all the community standards they can remember and think of into a common platform such as a Google Slides or Mentimeter.

The cohort will do this collectively, and at the end of 2 minutes, the trainers will review how many community standards the group was able to identify.

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COMMUNITY STANDARDS - THE KEY VALUES

EXPLANATION

The 22 community standards, which the trainers will discuss shortly, are based on feedback from people and the advice of experts in fields such as technology, public safety and human rights. Furthermore, to ensure that everyone's voice is valued, these standards include different views and beliefs, especially from people and communities that might otherwise be overlooked or marginalised.

The goal of these community standards is to create a place for expression and give people a voice. Meta wants people to be able to talk openly about the issues that matter to them, even if some may disagree or find them objectionable. In some cases, they allow content – which would otherwise go against these standards – if it's newsworthy and in the public interest. But they only do this only after weighing the public interest value against the risk of harm and looking to international human rights standards to make these judgments.

However, it is important to recognise that the internet creates new and increased opportunities for abuse. For these reasons, when these platforms limit expression, they do it in service of four values. The trainers will introduce the following four values, which frame the community standards. Before doing so, the trainers will ask the cohort to share their definitions of the following values.



QUICK DISCUSSION



What does authenticity mean to you? How would you define safety/dignity/privacy? This will help the cohort understand the similarities in their perspectives and that of the platform in which they are managing an online community. The trainer can supplement the discussion with the following points and explanations from Meta:

- **Authenticity** - We want to make sure that the content people see on Facebook is authentic. We believe that authenticity creates a better environment for sharing, and that's why we don't want people using Facebook to misrepresent who they are or what they're doing.
- **Safety** - We're committed to making Facebook a safe place. We remove content that could contribute to a risk of harm to the physical security of persons. Content that threatens people has the potential to intimidate, exclude or silence others and isn't allowed on Facebook.
- **Privacy** - We're committed to protecting personal privacy and information. Privacy gives people the freedom to be themselves, choose how and when to share on Facebook, and connect more easily.
- **Dignity** - We believe that all people are equal in dignity and rights. We expect that people will respect the dignity of others and not harass or degrade others.

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WHAT ARE THE COMMUNITY STANDARDS?

Note: It is important for trainers to note that Community Standards are rapidly evolving and changing, therefore it is necessary for trainers to update the list below in preparation for future sessions. The standards listed below were based on Facebook's Transparency Center ([Community Standards](#)) in August 2022.



EXPLANATION

For successful moderation of content, it is crucial for digital community stewards to be aware of the community standards which guide moderators to understand what content is acceptable and what is not.

The purpose of this session is for the trainers to inform the participants about 22 community standards.

In the interest of time, the trainers will focus on the following two areas when explaining each of the community standards: *What does this community standard mean, and what kind of content should I remove/be mindful of to enforce this community standard?*

The following are the 22 community standards the trainers will share with the participants:

Violence and Criminal Behaviour

1. Violence and incitement
2. Dangerous individuals and organisations
3. Coordinating harm and promoting crime
4. Restricted goods and services
5. Fraud and deception

Safety

6. Suicide and self-injury
7. Child sexual exploitation, abuse, and nudity
8. Adult sexual exploitation
9. Bullying and harassment
10. Human exploitation
11. Privacy violations

Objectionable Content

12. Hate speech
13. Violent and graphic content
14. Adult nudity and sexual activity
15. Sexual solicitation

Integrity and Authenticity

16. Account integrity and authentic identity
17. Spam
18. Cybersecurity
19. Inauthentic behaviour
20. Misinformation
21. Memorialization

Respecting Intellectual Property

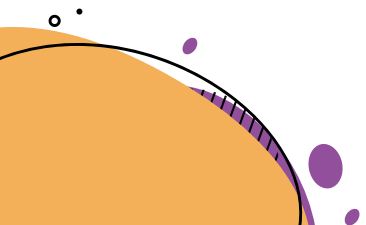
22. Intellectual property

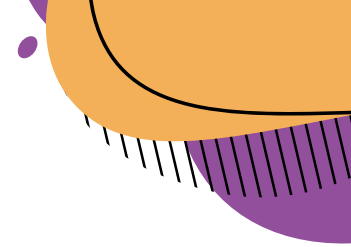
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ACTIVITY – LET’S IDENTIFY VIOLATIONS!

Note: the examples that were used in this activity were chosen for an international audience. However, you can swap these examples with ones that are more relevant based on your local context. Depending on the examples chosen, it may be a good idea to give a trigger warning, as all of the examples are those that violate community standards.





ACTIVITY

The objective of this activity is to test whether the participants have obtained a basic understanding of the community standards.

The trainers will share a range of social media posts that violate the above 22 community standards. The participants must correctly identify (from the options given) which community guideline is violated in the example that is shared on the screen.

This activity will enable the participants to become further familiar with the community guidelines, and help them identify violations of these guidelines. This will allow the community stewards to practise their moderation skills as well.

The trainers will encourage the participants to share the challenges in identifying these violations and discuss how we can seek to overcome these challenges.

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HOW DO WE ENFORCE COMMUNITY STANDARDS IN GROUPS?



EXPLANATION

Why are community standards important for my group?

Being committed to maintaining groups as safe places where meaningful connections happen is paramount. It is important for groups to remain a safe space for people to connect. Groups are proactively monitored for hate speech and calls for violence using a combination of the latest technology and human review.

Posts that violate community standards on things like hate speech are removed, and Facebook removes any groups that consistently violate those standards. This enforcement policy ensures that when reviewing a group to decide whether or not to take it down, we now look at admin and moderator content for violations. This includes posts by members that they have approved.

How can I use it in my group?

These community standards, as demonstrated in the previous activity, need to be taken into account when moderating the group content. If the content posted by group members violates these community standards, the admin should take the necessary steps to remove it.

Community standards can also be used in your online community to help build your rules. The participants should go back to the rules they developed at the beginning of the training and see if the community standards of the platform are reflected in the rules they have created for their group. This will help you identify the connection between the standards for the platform and the standards for your group.

Trainer to screen-share and demonstrate how to use Group Quality tool.

A QUICK TUTORIAL

What is group quality?

Group Quality is an overview of content removed in your group for violating certain community standards, including a section for false news found in your group.

If a group is in violation of community standards, Facebook may do any of the following:

- Disable the group if there are sufficient admin and moderator violations, which include:
 - If an admin or moderator creates content (e.g., posts, comments, rooms) that violates our Community Standards.
 - If an admin or moderator approves violating content from a group member.
- Take down the violating content.
- Turn on temporary post approval for members who repeatedly post violating content in the group.
- Show a group's content lower in the News Feed if a group repeatedly shares false news. Facebook may also stop suggesting that people join the group.

With the Group Quality tool, you can see exactly when Facebook removed a piece of content from your group along with which community standard it was violating. For most violation types, the actual content will also be clarified. This information is shared to provide more context why the decision was made.

Admins can find this tool in the Admin Tools section of your group under “Group Quality”. Note that Group Quality is only available to admins, not moderators.

The trainers will demonstrate how to use the [Group Quality](#) tool.

Session 2: Digital Rights - What do we need to know?



Session Objective: Discuss the range and importance of digital rights relevant to online communities.

10
MINS



DIGITAL RIGHTS - A QUICK ACTIVITY

The trainers will begin this discussion with an activity.

Similar to the earlier activity, participants will be given 2 minutes to identify as many digital rights as they can. This activity can be done through a word cloud to identify which digital rights are more prioritised and which ones are often overlooked.

The trainers will then begin the discussion on digital rights, below.

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MINS



LET'S UNDERSTAND UNIVERSAL DIGITAL RIGHTS

The term digital rights describe the human rights that allow individuals to access, use, create, and publish digital media or to access and use computers, other electronic devices, or communications networks. The term is particularly related to the protection and realisation of existing rights, such as the right to privacy or freedom of expression, in the context of new digital technologies, especially the Internet.

In this session, the trainers will inform the participants about the key digital rights they need to know.

There are multiple international laws, treaties, covenants, and principles that focus on promoting and protecting human rights – which includes digital rights. This includes:

- UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- ICCPR - International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights
- ICESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights
- CRC - Convention on the Rights of the Child
- CRPD - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

5
MINS

WHAT ARE THE DIGITAL RIGHTS THAT I NEED TO KNOW?

Note: As there is not a universally accepted list of digital rights, the facilitator should use their discretion to determine which set (A or B) of digital rights would be most helpful to discuss based on the context and composition of the training cohort. Feel free to create your own set by mixing them up or adding more specific rights to the ones mentioned below. Please note that the Slides reflect Set A, but may be swapped out with Set B.

Based on the above descriptions, let's look at important digital rights and principles that are essential for ensuring the safety and participation of all digital citizens.

SET A:

Access and nondiscrimination - Access to the Internet enables you to exercise your human rights. As a general principle, you should not be disconnected from the Internet against your will, except when it is decided by a court. Moreover, Internet access should be affordable and non-discriminatory.

Freedom of expression and information - You are free to express yourself online and to access information and opinions, including those that may offend, shock or disturb, whilst respecting others' reputations and privacy.

Freedom of assembly, association and participation - You have the freedom to use any website, application, or another service to associate with your peers. You also enjoy the right to protest peacefully online. However, you should be aware that you may face legal consequences if online protest leads to blockages, disruption of services or damage to the property of others.

Privacy and data protection - Your personal data should only be processed with your consent or if it is laid down by law. You should be informed if your personal data is processed or transferred to other parties and when by whom, and for what purpose.

Education and literacy - You should have online access to education and knowledge in order to exercise your rights and freedoms on the internet.

SET B: The following was obtained from the charter of human rights and principles for the internet developed by the Internet Rights and Principles Coalition (Source: [OHCHR](#)).

UNIVERSALITY: All humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights, which must be respected, protected, and fulfilled in the online environment.

ACCESSIBILITY: Everyone has an equal right to access and use a secure and open Internet.

NEUTRALITY: Everyone must have uniform access to the Internet's content, free from prioritisation, discrimination, censorship, filtering, or traffic control.

EXPRESSION: Everyone has the right to hold and express opinions and to seek, receive, and impart information on the Internet without arbitrary interference or surveillance. Everyone has the right to communicate anonymously online.

PRIVACY: Everyone has the right to privacy online, free from surveillance, including the right to control how their personal data is collected, used, disclosed, retained, and disposed of.

DIVERSITY: Cultural and linguistic diversity on the Internet must be promoted, and technical and policy innovation should be encouraged to facilitate diverse expressions.

GOVERNANCE: Rights must form the legal and normative foundations upon which the Internet operates and is governed. This shall happen in a transparent and multilateral manner based on principles of openness, inclusive participation, and accountability as prescribed by law.

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MINS



ACTIVITY – LET’S IDENTIFY DIGITAL RIGHTS!



The objective of this activity is to test whether the participants have obtained a basic understanding of digital rights.

The trainers will share a range of social media posts that violate the above-listed digital rights. The participants must correctly identify which digital right is violated in the content that is shared on the screen.

This activity will enable the participants to become further familiar with digital rights and also help them identify violations of these rights in online communities. This will allow the participants to practise their moderation skills too.

The trainers will encourage the participants to share what were the challenges in identifying these violations and discuss how we can overcome these challenges as well.

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MINS



DECOLONISING DIGITAL RIGHTS



EXPLANATION AND DISCUSSION



The objective of this brief discussion is to help digital community stewards understand that digital technologies have the potential not only to reproduce but also to amplify existing forms of oppression, such as racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia.

The growing use and deployment of digital technologies have the potential to affect almost every aspect of our lives, as they become involved in everything from hiring processes to the operation of the “welfare state” and the criminal justice system.

The digital rights field exists to promote and protect rights and freedoms in the digital sphere. In order to do so, it is crucial that the field reflects the society it works to safeguard. Here, the field must do better and ensure there are no blind spots in our work so that the digital rights of marginalised groups are upheld.

By starting a process of decoloniality, we can begin to acknowledge that these forms of oppression have their roots in a history of domination and colonisation and are maintained by structural forces. Our goal is to initiate a process that challenges the structural causes of oppression in order to work towards a digital rights field in which all groups in society have their voices heard and which works to protect the digital rights of all.



Trainers can also show [this video](#) to the participants to provide further context to the work that is being done globally to mainstream the decolonisation of digital rights.



Session 3: Reflecting on Digital Rights and Standards



Session Objective: To reflect on digital rights and community standards and the responsibility of digital community stewards.

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MINS



CONCLUSION SESSION: THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DIGITAL COMMUNITY STEWARDS IN PROTECTING DIGITAL RIGHTS

15
MINS



ACTIVITY

For this activity, trainers will facilitate a discussion among the participants to reflect on the lessons learned from this session on digital rights (participants may also want to think back to the “privilege pyramid” activity in Module 2), and what this all means for their group members.

They will give participants a couple minutes for a self-reflection about their group and the digital rights that are most relevant or important to them.

Next, trainers will ask participants to join breakout rooms (or break out in groups of three or four physically), to discuss.

Finally, the participants will rejoin the plenary and report back some examples of dilemmas they have encountered as digital community stewards. Note: this can be combined with the concluding discussion, below.

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MINS



CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The trainer should prepare some guiding questions for the concluding discussion. This will vary depending on the cohort, context and previous discussions. However, please find some sample guiding questions below which can be used to reflect on the learnings of this training more generally. We suggest sitting in a circle during this final discussion.

- *What does online/digital social cohesion mean to you, if anything?*
- *After the training, do you believe you have improved skills and tools to build trust and connection within your groups in your role as a digital and online community steward?*
 - *What prevents you from being able to create positive, trusting, and cohesive group dynamics in your groups?*
 - *Provide an example on how you plan to take action to build trust and connection among your group after participating in the training*
- *Please share an example of a strategy or technique you learned from the training to improve the diversity, inclusion, and safety of underrepresented or marginalised users in your group.*
- *In what ways was the training most helpful to you and your role as a community steward?*
 - *What do you feel could be improved about the training or what was missing from the training?*
- *What can social media companies (i.e. Facebook, Whatsapp, Youtube, etc.) do to motivate you or make it easier for you to promote trust and connection across the groups you manage?*
- *What ideas do you have for community stewards to be more actively engaged in creating more positive, engaging, and trustworthy online and digital spaces?*
- *Provide any other comments or insights you would like to share*

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MINS



MODULE 9 CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Next, the trainer will facilitate a Q&A session.

The module will end with a Pop Quiz on Kahoot (this is an optional activity; however, this is a great way to energise the participants at the end of the module).

Note: See [Content for Training Activities](#) for quiz content and instructions on how to make a Kahoot.

The PPT slide can be linked to the Kahoot quiz for ease of access and presentability. Trainers can encourage participation by handing out chocolates to the pop quiz winners.

Finally, the Trainer will ask the participants to complete a short feedback form. This can be optional and created according to the organiser and facilitator's needs, therefore a sample is not shared.



The content of this module was adopted and inspired by the following resources:

- [The Charter of Human Rights and Principles for the Internet](#): Internet Rights and Principles Coalition.
- [Introduction to Digital Rights](#): Share Foundation
- [Your Digital Rights in Brief](#): Council of Europe
- [Decolonizing Digital Rights](#): Digital Freedom Fund
- [Training Manual on Digital Rights and Freedom of Expression Online](#): Media Legal Defence Initiative
- [Module 4 – My Rights Online](#): Web Wise
- [Facebook Community Standards](#): Transparency Center Facebook

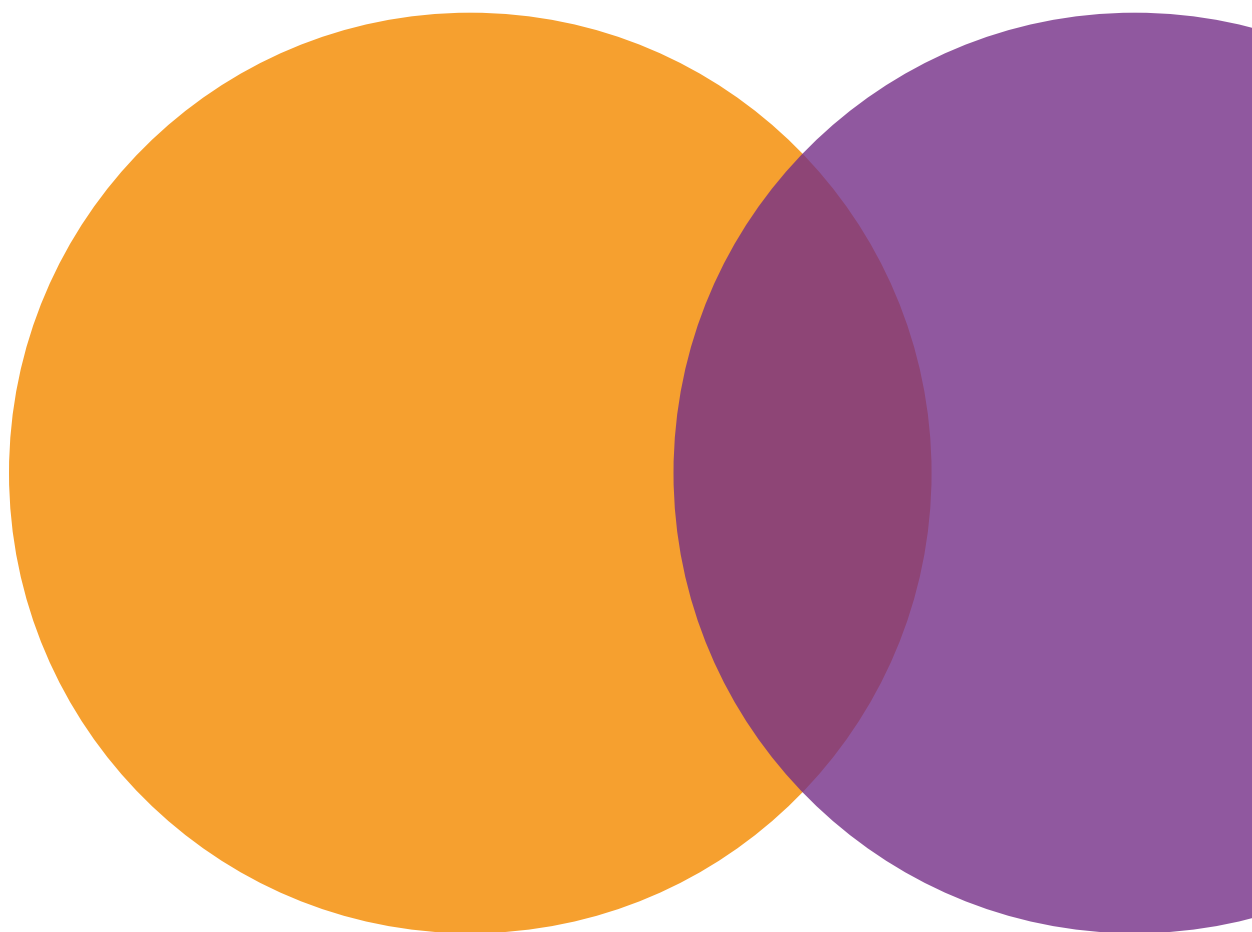


Annex

Annex I: Resources: Physical and Digital

Annex II: PowerPoint

Annex III: Participant Booklet



Annex I: Resources: Physical and Digital

TRAINING MATERIALS:

- A Participant attendance sheet (optional)
- Classic in-person training materials: sufficient pens, paper pads, sticky notes, flipcharts, markers, etc.
- Consider providing participants with name badges, table tents, notebooks and a pen if possible.
- Printed activity sheets and any ordered materials for activities (see Annex 1 for specifics)
- Technical requirements to convey to the venue: Projector, sound system (a microphone is optional, but speakers will be necessary for playing video), and the necessary wires to connect your laptops to the projector system.
- Suggested room setup: half circle facing the front, with 10–20 participants. This set up is useful for plenary sessions and also ideal for small group participation. However, it is advised to customise to suit your needs and audience.

SUGGESTED PURCHASE

- Module 1: Something similar to this [Half pipes + balls activity](#). [Example video](#).

PRINTOUTS

- Module 2: Printouts for [privilege pyramid](#) activity (one copy per group, approximately 4 groups). See module for suggested online adaption.
- Module 3: Stationary for Misinformation Group Activity. See module for suggested written text, and online adaption.
- Module 3: [React! Activity](#) printed out for activity (one copy per participant, and to be cut out). See module for more information and online adaption.
- Module 6: [dilemma + rating activity](#) (1 copy, single sided). See module for more information and how to adapt for online.

SAMPLE ENERGISERS:

- Physical/In-Person Energizers: List of [In-Person Energizers](#) (Source: NDI.org)
- Online/Remote Energizers: List of [Online/Virtual Energizers](#) (Source: Vantage Circle)

DIGITAL RESOURCES

- See [Content for Activities](#) for:
 - How to create Mentimeter and Kahoot accounts
 - Sample content for Mentimeter Activities
 - Sample content for Kahoot Quizzes
- [Annex for Modules 6, Session 3](#) on Digital Safety features and settings.
- Videos:
 - Suggested videos for inclusion in the training are linked session-per-session in this document, and also linked within the sample PPTs.
- Additional blank Jamboards or Google Slides for increased opportunities for participation

Annex II: PowerPoint

- Powerpoints (including suggested videos for inclusion [are available here](#))
 - Introductory Module
 - Module 1
 - Module 2
 - Module 3
 - Module 4
 - Module 5
 - Module 6
 - Module 7
 - Module 8
 - Module 9 / Closing

Annex III: Participant Booklet

These resources may be handed out or sent to the participants at the completion of the modules.

- [Link to Participant Booklet](#)



Training for Digital Community Stewards:

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COMMUNITIES**



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FACILITATOR'S GUIDE