Resiliency Initiative

Step-by-Step Guide to Social Media

To help Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) advance their causes via social media.

Step-by-Step Guide to Social Media

This handy guide is a summary of the Resiliency Initiative's approach to using social media for CSOs. You can find more in-depth articles, worksheets, infographics, and videos on the topics covered here in the Resources section of the Resiliency Initiative Portal: www.resilliencyinitiative.org.

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Increasing community resilience in challenging times

Introduction to The Resiliency Initiative

We live in extraordinary times. The Covid-19 pandemic has increased tensions among communities in Asia along religious, ethnic, and gender lines. There is more hate speech, discrimination, xenophobia, and online misinformation that can lead to extremism or violence.

The Resiliency Initiative is a partnership between Facebook and The Asia Foundation to promote tolerance, strengthen interfaith and interethnic understanding, and counter violent extremism by helping to build resilient communities across the Asia-Pacific region.

How to use this guide

The Resiliency Initiative offers you essential social media tools to build resilience in your community. You know your community best—the people, the history, and the tensions.

The Resiliency Initiative provides you with free online resources, including this guide, as well as capabilities to promote understanding and tolerance within your community. You can also discover future training opportunities and connect with other civil society organizations (CSOs) who may be nearby and who are dealing with similar issues.

This guide provides a summary for CSOs of the Resiliency Initiative's approach to using social media. It can be shared online or downloaded for offline use. You can also find in-depth articles, worksheets, infographics, and videos on the topics covered here in the Resources section of this website. The Resiliency Initiative is designed to grow over time, and we hope you come back again and again for more answers to your social media questions!

Why you need to get online

CSOs need to go where the conversations are happening to empower the people you are trying to help. Go social! Billions of people around the world are using social media to share and trade ideas, opinions, information, and goods. It's also a highly effective way to connect with the right people and to build and support both online and offline communities.

Social media, like traditional media, offers opportunities to collect and share news, communicate with audiences, and advocate for change, but there are other advantages to using social media.

- It's fast and immediate. Social media operates in real time and is constantly being updated. You can share your message directly with your audience on social media simply by pressing send or post.

- Social media networks can reach large numbers of people.
- It's easy to use. The interfaces are very intuitive and little training is required.
- It's a powerful way to communicate that is free or relatively inexpensive.

Using offline and online communication together

You can use traditional media and social media together. Online campaigns can complement existing approaches. The key is to pick and choose what works best for your communication objectives. Sometimes a car with a loudspeaker driving through the streets might be more effective than an online newsletter campaign. Why? You might spend a lot of time and effort creating your newsletter only to discover that very few of the people you send it to actually open and read it. Every situation is different, and you need to choose the most effective type of communication for each one. It could be online, offline, or both.

Sometimes social media campaigns have the power to translate into real-life action that crosses borders. The powerful #blacklivesmatter movement started in the United States of America and has spread around the globe. It has sparked action for indigenous communities and people of color as far away as Australia.

The online #metoo movement is also global and has come to Asia. It continues to inspire women to publicly reveal their personal stories, demanding an end to sexual abuse within communities, companies, industries, and even governments. Social media has also been a key part of public protests across Asia.

Social media is changing all the time. The important thing is to be clear about what you want to communicate, and then choose how best to communicate it. Is social media the best way, or is there a traditional way that might be better? Look for ways to combine the two. For example, you could record a speech at a live event and then share it online.

Choose your social media wisely

There are many social media platforms to choose from, and it's important to be aware of them, what they're used for, and how popular they are in your region. Each platform has its own characteristics. You don't have to know how to use all of them. Just be aware of them.

You also don't have to be on every one. It's actually better to be on one or two platforms that you can use well than to spend a lot of time and effort on many.

You need to find out which platform is most popular with the people you are trying to reach. What social media are they using? Once you know that, you can spend more time crafting better messages to connect with those people.

Start with one platform and concentrate your efforts there first. Once you master that, expand to another platform if your communication objectives require it.

How to develop your social media strategy

Even though this is "social" media, it's not just for socializing. You need a clear and consistent plan to get your message to the right people.

The Resiliency Initiative recommends three simple steps for developing your social media strategy. Completing these three steps will show you exactly what you need to do to develop your organization's social media campaigns.

You will need to answer the following questions:
1. (What) do you want to communicate?
2. (Who) do you want to communicate with?
3. (How) will you engage your audience?

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1. (What) do you want to communicate?

Every social intervention aims to change something. To really make a difference, you need to have a clear picture in mind of what you want to change and why. This will help you develop a clear communication objective.

Make your communication objective as measurable and specific as possible by asking more questions.
- How will I know I have succeeded?
- What targets or metrics can prove that I have achieved my objective?
- What is the time frame for achieving this objective?

> *Important Tip:*
> *The more specific and measurable you make your communication objectives, the more focused and effective your communications will be. What actions or behavior changes do you want to inspire in your audience? Your communication objective is not just the number of posters or leaflets you produce. Stay focused. One clear objective would be great!*

Use these thought-starters to define your objectives:

Awareness—build knowledge and understanding of a certain topic.
For example:
I want to build knowledge about (issue x)

Action—join, visit, sign up, attend, participate, support.
For example:
I want people to sign up for our newsletter.
I want people to sign our pledge/petition.
I want people to donate.

Engagement—change behavior or beliefs.
For example:
I want to show how dangerous drunk driving is so people will stop driving drunk.
I want to challenge community beliefs about (x) so they will stop rejecting people with (x).

Here is an example of a communication objective:
to foster better community relations.

A refined communication objective could be:
to foster better community relations between youth and elders in order to reduce incidents of physical and verbal elder-abuse in the community in the next two years.

Combine your answers into one sentence or paragraph and refine it.

Before you proceed, it is important to truly understand the challenges of your proposed project. You need to learn from past successes and failures in order to successfully tackle your issue. When in doubt, check with experts to confirm your understanding of the circumstances.

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Step 2: (Who) do you want to communicate with?
Identifying who you need to communicate with is key to effective communication. "Everyone" is not a target audience. It's too broad. You need to be more specific so that your communication will be noticed by the right people.

Think of how fashion is advertised. The clothes are presented in a way that makes a connection with certain people, not everyone. That would be too broad. Certain styles or fabrics may not work in certain climates, don't appeal to certain people, or don't fit their budgets. Companies need to know who the clothes are for before they can design an effective advertising campaign.

Define your target audience by age, gender, location, employment, marital and family status, and other relevant demographics.
For example:
My target audience is unemployed youth between the ages of 18 and 25 living in city X.

Define your target audience.

Now consider how your target audience thinks, feels, and acts. It is important to understand their habits and attitudes so you can truly connect with them by using the right messages.
For example:
They think they will never get a job. They act in a reckless way, because they think their life will be short.

Now think about how your target audience thinks, feels and acts.

. . . .

Step 3: (How) will you engage your audience?
Use the "3Ms" to engage with your audience.
- Message
- Messenger
- Medium

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Your message

What is the one thing you want to say to your target audience?

Your key message should be clear and succinct. Will your message resonate with the audience? Can you make it more appealing? Consider the language, tone, and context. It shouldn't be condescending or insensitive. Some words can take on positive or negative connotations with different audiences, cultures, and contexts.

Your messenger

Choose a good messenger to help you reach your target audience. Who do you think can most effectively convey your message? The messenger needs to be known and respected by your audience. You can feature them in both online and offline communication.

Credible voices might include:
- Respected organizations.
- Individuals your target audience respects, like sports stars, musicians, or actors.
- Respected faith, community, or youth leaders.

One example of a powerful messenger is Greta Thunberg. Climate change has been an issue for decades, and many have tried to raise public awareness,but Thunberg has really connected with her audience and has become an inspiration for young people around the globe. Why? She's young and direct. She also isn't afraid to speak truth to power. This makes people listen and has inspired other students to do so, too. Ralyn (Lilly) Satidtanasarn, a young student from Thailand, started campaigning against single-use plastics more than six years ago, when she was eight years old. She, too, makes adults question their actions.

You need to decide who the best messenger will be for your project and how they can help.

Powerful activist messengers Greta Thunberg of Sweden and Ralyn (Lilly) Satidtanasarn of Thailand

Source: www.shutterstock.com

Source: www.weser-kurier.de

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Your medium
The best medium (channel or system of communication) for your organization is the one that your audience uses. "Medium" means both the type of platform (app) and the type of content on that platform.

Platforms
You need to consider which platforms your target audience uses so you can use them too.

Content
Consider what type of content suits your target audience.
    Video: short clips or animations
    Texts: slogans, hashtags, or open letters
    Images: photos, memes
    Audio: podcasts or short audio clips
    Comics: short panels or animations

Research what communication tools and content your audience prefers through surveys, interviews, or even direct observation. You will also need to consider your resources and budget. Which channels or platforms are the best to reach this audience? What kind of content will be easily accessible, shareable, and interesting to them?

Make a short list of the platforms your audience uses and the type of content you can create.

"Do No Harm" considerations
What sensitivities exist in your community that you need to be aware of? Is there anything in your communication that could trigger these sensitivities? Check with others, both within and outside your community, to make sure you have thought of everything. You also need to check that your content is accurate and based on evidence.

Sensitive considerations may include certain words, topics, images, symbols, or even colors.

Your complete social media communication strategy
Now you can fill in this form with the answers from above.

Communication Objective:

Target Audience:

Key Message:

Messenger(s):

Medium (platform and content type):

"Do No Harm" considerations:

Congratulations! You have a strategy. Revisit this process at least once a year to assess what you have learned, what has changed, and how your strategy can be further improved. This strategy may evolve over time to reflect changes both within your organization and outside in the wider community. Click here to download the full Step-by-Step Guide to Develop your Social Media Strategy worksheet.

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Section 2: How to Communicate with Your Audience

The internet has democratized publishing. You no longer need special equipment, skills, or distribution channels. Given the right tools, anyone can now get online and become a publisher within seconds, and the amount of data in the world is rapidly increasing. Just because something is on the internet, however, doesn't mean it's a good piece of communication.

Good communication connects with people. It has an impact on them and makes them think, feel, or act in response to a message.

You should be aiming for good communication with every piece of information you publish. No one wants to waste time, effort, or resources producing something that people won't read or see. This chapter will show you how to get your audience's attention and make your message connect with them.

Getting to know your audience

Everyone is not your audience! If we said our target audience was everyone, that would mean almost 8 billion people on the internet! They are not all interested in your message.

You need to make sure you have a clear idea who your audience is and why you want to communicate with them. Think about what kind of people they are; what they like to do or watch; what they are motivated by. This information will help you find a way to connect your message to your audience.

How can you communicate a message that connects with parts of your audience's daily life or experiences? A good exercise is to create a "day in the life" of a typical member of your target audience. Write down what you think they do in a day. This may give you some inspiring clues to connecting with them. If they're online early in the morning, that might be a good time to post your content. If they're football fans, maybe you can get their favorite football players to help your campaign.

Knowing more about your audience will help you to understand the kinds of messages they will respond to and, ultimately, to create impact.

Tell powerful stories that connect

Stories are how we relate to each other as humans and establish emotional connections. We are told stories as children and continue to tell them throughout our lives. Politicians tell us stories about their vision, and businesses tell us stories about their brands. We tell stories to those around us everyday to teach, entertain, and motivate.

Use the power of storytelling to connect with the audience that you identified in "How to Connect Social Media with the Real World." You need to connect with the hearts of your audience to inspire positive change. Your message needs to resonate with them.

The "4Ps" of storytelling

There are four key elements common to all good stories.

People

Who is in the story? A human character is the best way to make a connection with the audience, because they get interested in what happens to the character.

Place

Where does the story take place? Location gives depth to your character and the story. You can use it to visually communicate a lot of information in a short time.

Plot

What is the twist or tension in your story? Really good movies are the ones that surprise you. There's a twist that you didn't expect. Build tension in your story to keep the audience guessing, or simply tell them something they don't know. You can even start your story with a thought-provoking fact or statement like "Extremism doesn't work" or "Violence shows you are weak!"

Purpose

Why should anyone care? Show your audience why the subject matters.

Four different types of storytelling

Some types of storytelling appeal to some audiences more than others, and some are more practical for the storyteller. Here are four different ways to tell your stories.

Oral storytelling

We spoke before we learned to write. This is true of both ancient and modern people. Preliterate oral culture is still vigorously alive among some populations, such as indigenous groups in Australia, where song, chants, and spoken stories pass ideas from one generation to another.

Listening to a human voice can be very compelling, especially the voice of an authority figure. Imagine how powerful a simple message from a famous and highly respected singer could be when transmitted to your audience.

Podcasts are a modern storytelling medium that can make words travel far. They often feature real people telling their stories and can reach audiences all around the globe. Consider using audio interviews or voice recordings to share your story with your audience. You could also create a voice message campaign that people could simply forward to their friends. This would be particularly effective for audiences with low literacy rates.

Visual storytelling

Ancient cave paintings and modern Instagram feeds both tell visual stories—stories that people can see and follow. Many of us absorb information visually more quickly than by reading text. A photograph or an illustration can quickly convey ideas and emotions and make us think differently about things. Visual storytelling can be both powerful and extremely efficient.

Anyone can take a photograph with the touch of a button. It only becomes a story if there is a message in the image or an idea in a series of images. It's how you tell the story with the photographs that matters. That is the true art of storytelling.

Visual storytelling is a good way to connect emotionally with your target audience. It is also useful for audiences with low literacy rates.

Written storytelling
The printing press made the written word a medium of mass communication. New forms of storytelling—novels, essays, newspapers, and posters—could now reach enormous audiences.

For deep analysis, consider blog posts. A blog post can be as long or as short as you need. A series of tweets on Twitter can perform much the same function for that audience.

Handwriting still has a special power. Witty, humorous protest signs are irresistible. Photographs of handwriting add a touch of human passion and personality to your message that keyboard text cannot provide.

Digital storytelling
The smartphone has emerged as a world-changing device that brings together text and images, video and sound into an unprecedented storytelling tool. The power of a printer, a publisher, or a movie producer can be held in our own hands. Everyday, people are telling their own stories in posts on social media. Everyone is a storyteller.

Social media is fast, creative, and adaptive. Blogs are better for telling longer stories. You can use more words. Tweets are great for short, sharp announcements and observations, but people have adapted limited-character formats to tell longer stories by linking several posts together. This happens on other platforms too. Users create new ways to tell stories.

Remember
In order to communicate effectively with your audience you need to:
- Clearly identify your audience
- Get to know your audience; what they think, feel, and do.
- Tell powerful stories that connect your audience with your message.

Section 3: How to Create Effective Social Media

Social media is all about sharing—sharing news, stories, images, and ideas. It's important to create good content that people will want to read or watch and then share with others. The better your content is, the more likely people will share it. This means your message will be more effective with more people. Here are a few handy tips to help you create quality content and maximize your online presence.

Constant change
Social media is an ever-changing landscape. It is fast-moving, and new platforms and ways of communicating are emerging all the time. Be open to learning new things and finding new information.

Social media interfaces are easy to use, especially the most popular platforms. Regular use helps you learn what works and what doesn't. The most important thing is don't be afraid to try.

Choosing the right platform
There are many different social media platforms to use. Each platform has its own characteristics. Be aware of what they are used for and how popular they are in your region. What platforms does your audience use? Also think about the type of content needed for each platform and whether you have the capabilities to maintain a regular presence on the platform.

Your content needs to stand out
There is a vast amount of information on the internet. If you want your message to reach your target audience, you need to get their attention. Your content needs to be interesting and stand out from the enormous amount of information they are receiving. Just think how many messages you receive everyday. Do you carefully read everything? What gets your attention? Is it nice photos, interesting headlines, or certain colors? Here are some essential tips to making good content that will stand out from the crowd.

Always make a good first impression
First impressions are very important to quickly get the attention of first-time visitors to your social media pages. Make sure your cover photos and avatars on all your social media accounts are as visually appealing and as consistent as possible to link all your communication back to your organization.

You can leave your cover photo blank or a solid color. This can be a differentiating factor. You can also upload multiple images. Some social media platforms let you select a template for your profile. Use templates to help craft a strong look and feel for your organization. Use your own images or select one of the library images available to design banners, headers, cover art, and much more.

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Use branding

Some people find the idea of branding distasteful, even manipulative—just something that big business uses to fool us into buying things. There's nothing inherently bad about branding. It's simply a tool that can be used for good or bad. Some extremist organizations use it extremely effectively to attract followers and incite them to act. Branding can also be a force for good. Powerful brands make an emotional connection with consumers. UNICEF does this with their instantly recognizable shade of blue and images of children. Successful brands know their audiences well and are consistent. We can learn from them.

Branding for your organization means being consistent with how you communicate. Use the same color palette, font, and style of photos consistently so that people will instantly recognize your organization. Even the way you write or "speak" to the audience matters. Any communication from your organization should have the same look and feel, regardless of the format.

Create diverse content

Too much of the one thing would be boring, right? Use a mixture of content to attract people's attention.

Different types of content could be:
- Promotions for a campaign or a project
- Upcoming events
- Impact and success stories
- Comments and testimonials from beneficiaries
- Stories about your organization's culture
- Profiles of team members or volunteers
- Current affairs (including memes and gifs)
- Links to helpful resources
- Reports and research findings

Good images matter online

Visual images get attention! Think about what attracts your attention when you are scrolling through your social media feed or simply reading a newspaper. It's the images, right? Graphics, photographs, and advertisements. To make your message stand out from the many messages your audience sees everyday, you need to get good images.

Images can:
- Help communicate ideas, simple or complex, with few words.
- Make your content look professional and authoritative.
- Make people remember what you are saying.
- Encourage people to share your information with others.

Lots of text with no images is also boring! It's like a book or a magazine with no pictures. You definitely need images for successful online communication. Words and images work together to tell powerful stories.

Sourcing free images

You can use your own original images online or use images created by other people. There are so many photographs and visual images on the internet that using other people's images can be cheap, quick, and easy.

Sources of free images include image libraries, photographs on social media, and photographs from websites. Be sure you have permission to use them, however. Check for permission on the site or by emailing the owner. Some content-creation tools like Canva give you access to copyright-free images.

Always state where you get images from on the internet, even when they are free. This is important because:
- It is widely considered the right thing to do. Everyone deserves credit for their work.
- It tells your audience that you are not stealing images, and gains their trust. It means you are honest about where you get your information.
- It is good digital citizenship and tells your audience that the image is legitimate.

Content creation for free: start with free templates

It doesn't matter if you are not a designer or have no technical skills. You can create great-looking content online with templates. There are many to choose from. There are often so many choices that it is difficult to choose exactly what you need. The programs will suggest good ideas for you.

The good news: there are content creation tools that are both easy to learn and FREE! Yes, that's right, free. Many small businesses and organizations that cannot afford a graphic designer use them.

Some are free for a trial period like 14 days. Then you have to sign up and pay. Others are free for individuals, but large organizations have to pay.

Sometimes the tools are free depending on your usage. You only have to pay when you use them a lot.

You can create a variety of content with these tools, including:
- Presentations
- Flyers
- Posters
- Social media images that are pre-sized to look good on any social media platform
- Headers
- Logos
- Animations
- Infographics
- Surveys—use Google Survey or Survey Monkey
- Memes
- GIFs

Our recommended tool

There are many free, online content-creation tools. Our top pick is Canva.

We like Canva because it:
- Is easy to learn and use.
- Has lots of templates for many different formats.
- Is regularly updated with new template choices.
- Can choose the entire look and feel of your design for you.
- Lets you work in teams, so other people can comment on your work.
- Keeps your projects in your account so you can adapt them each time.

You can use Canva to make sure every message you create is branded and looks the same, so people know the message is from your organization. A clear and consistent look and feel helps to make people aware of your group and take notice of the information. If it didn't have a similar look, people might not immediately link it to your group.

Always research your tools before you use them. New tools are being created all the time. You might discover a new one that you like better. Also, ask for recommendations from other people.

Stay focused

Always remember your key message. What do you want to tell your audience? You can tell them this in different ways using different tools, but don't lose sight of what you want to say. Make your content look great, but also check to see that it is communicating your message.

Think about the image of your organization and the consistency of all its content online. For example it would be strange to start posting cute cat photos on an anti-hate-speech social media page—unless the cat is giving relevant advice!

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Section 4: How to Measure Your Impact

Whether you are working online or offline, measurement is key to understanding the impact of your program—to gauge how and how much your work is making a difference to the people, groups, organizations, or communities involved.

Why measurement is important

Your instincts might provide you with a good sense of positive or negative outcomes, but only a proper impact evaluation will comprehensively identify the strengths and weaknesses of your work. Impact evaluations are important regardless of whether your activity is online or offline, simple or complex, cheap or expensive.

Regardless of whether the impact is large or small, long- or short-term, positive or negative, intended or unintended, you need to know this information for several reasons.

1. Lessons for the future.
Well-designed impact evaluations allow you to understand what aspects of your activity worked better than others, and to some extent why. This will increase your ability to focus on the things that really matter and will tell you what you need to change in the future.

2. Save time and resources.
Impact evaluations can help you to make sure that time and money are well spent. They can help you maximize your return on investment.

3. Make it easier to attract funding.
Impact evaluations can help you protect ongoing funding and even attract new donors. Being able to provide evidence of your impact can help you better show the effectiveness and value of your program and demonstrate your capacity for project management and accountability.

4. Become an agent for social change.
Impact evaluations are very powerful because they provide evidence that you can contribute to solving a significant social problem. This evidence can be used to show others that what you do matters.
Impact evaluations can:
- inspire others who want to do similar work in other contexts.
- raise awareness about the need for more projects like yours to tackle important social issues.
- be a useful tool to advocate for policy change. For example, if you can demonstrate that your campaign makes social media users less likely to consume online misinformation, this evidence can be used to attract more government and private investments in programs like yours.

Impact evaluations might also help you to become part of a larger network of people, in your country and beyond, who advocate for similar policy changes.

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Ways to measure your impact

Finding the best tools to measure the impact of your program can be difficult. Here are some tips for finding the best evaluation strategy and choosing the best measurement tools for your project.

1. Use existing measurement tools.
Avoid, so far as possible, creating your own measurement tools. Research and select existing and proven measurement tools that were created by experts in the field of evaluation. You can find a library of tools to measure levels of violence or prejudice and related concepts (like fundamentalism, extremism, resilience) here—just scroll to the bottom of the page.

2. Partner with research professionals.
A good option can be to invite a professional researcher to join the evaluation team. Collaboration between researchers and CSOs can be mutually beneficial: you will get important help to design, measure, analyze, and interpret the data, and the researcher will have the opportunity to apply their knowledge to real-world problems. Depending on ethical and security constraints, they may also be able to use some of the data for teaching and research.

3. Use a mixed-methods approach to measure your impact.
This means gathering different kinds of data from different evaluation tools. You can look at how many likes, shares, and views your online content gets. You can also conduct an online survey to ask your audience what they thought of your content. You can interview your audience, via Zoom or in person, and ask them to give their opinions in their own words. Many good evaluations of social media campaigns adopt a mix of different approaches.

4. Discuss your evaluation plan with program stakeholders.
We suggest discussing your evaluation plan with selected stakeholders in a focus group or round-table discussion. Describe your evaluation plan and ask them what should be measured and how. Their different points of view can provide important guidance for your evaluation. This sort of consultation can also generate goodwill for your project, because your stakeholders will better understand what you're doing and will feel that they're part of the initiative.

Your stakeholders can include members of the relevant communities, government representatives, influential citizens, and activists.

Using real-world indicators

We need to be able to clearly define the boundaries of concepts like extremism, hate, tolerance" and resilience so that we can measure them effectively. Let's imagine that we want to measure tolerance for religious minorities in a religious Facebook group. Do we only count as markers of intolerance calls for violence against religious minorities, or do we also include openly offensive remarks? At the same time, what are the markers of tolerance? Are we only looking for open expressions of respect and appreciation for religious minorities, or do we also count expressions of ambivalence? Choosing to count only one or all types of expression as markers of tolerance or intolerance could significantly change the results of our evaluation.

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To transform the idea of tolerance into real-world indicators, you need to be able to measure tolerance. You need a measurement scale. To give a simple example, you could employ a scale in which the following values are assigned:

On the negative side:
–10 tolerance points = a call for violence.
–4 hate points = an expression of social distancing.

On the positive side:
+1 tolerance points = an expression of ambivalence ("I am not opposed to Hindus").
+10 tolerance points = an open expression of appreciation for a religious minority ("I really like and respect Christians").

Points can also be assigned to different actions people may take, not just what they say. For example, writing a post that shows signs of tolerance or intolerance toward religious minorities could be assigned a certain point-value, while liking or sharing such a post would count for half the points of writing it. Whether you aim to measure tolerance, discrimination, gender-based violence, resilience, trust, or any other concept, you need to assign different values to different terms.

Using comparison groups

There are two main elements that should be included in your evaluations whenever possible: pre-post intervention design and comparison groups.

The idea behind a pre-post intervention design is simply checking a situation before a project begins and checking it again after the project ends. For example, a runner could record their time before starting a new, three-month training program. They could then record their time at the end of the three months of training. This would be a pre-post intervention design. Similarly, if you want to know whether your intervention to reduce antimigrant discrimination on Facebook worked, you need to measure levels of discrimination before and after your intervention and check for differences.

Comparison groups are made of people who do not participate in your program at the time of the evaluation. You need to collect data from them too. This allows you to check what would have happened if you had not run your project.

Comparison groups allow you to control for other things that might affect your program. For example, what if, during your intervention to improve tolerance toward religious minorities on Facebook, a member of a religious minority were to commit a heinous crime against a local girl? It is very likely that this act, and the media discussion about it, would increase the level of intolerance toward religious minorities on Facebook. In this case, having a comparison group would be the only way to measure the impact of your program.

Section 5: Social Media Do's and Don'ts

You may have heard of the "Do No Harm" principle. It's a concept widely used by many organizations, including the UN and The Asia Foundation, to ensure that initiatives do not accidentally cause harm or create conflict.

"Do No Harm" recognizes that any intervention or program, no matter how well-intended, can have unintended consequences. The same is true of any social media campaign. Your well-meaning posts may in fact have unintended or even negative consequences.

We need to carefully consider our behavior online, as both the positive and negative power of the internet is enormous. Anyone with internet access can say anything and reach vast numbers of people. Things can easily spiral out of control if we don't uphold basic codes of conduct online. Have consideration for others online just as you would in the real world.

Another key reason to follow a few simple principles online is to be effective. It's easy to waste a lot of time with common mistakes. The flip side is that you can make life easy for yourself and do a great job with a few key pointers.

What can go wrong?

Messages may be misunderstood. For example, talking positively about building peace and understanding may seem insensitive to people who are suffering from ongoing violence.

Social media campaigns may make people feel that they're being ostracized or ignored. For example, a campaign to mobilize young people may make village elders feel undermined.

Sharing of misinformation, disinformation, or fake news (deliberately or accidentally) can lead to harmful reactions. During the Covid pandemic, influential individuals tried to share health advice that was incorrect or conflicted with professional guidance, causing confusion and uncertainty.

Posts that target a certain group or that rely on stereotypes or incorrect assumptions may have harmful consequences. In some countries, stereotypes about different groups and assumptions about the spread of the coronavirus resulted in more hate speech, discrimination, and violence.

A social media message may attract negative comments or posts. Even the most well-meaning post may be inundated with negative comments. Often, the more effective the post the more negative comments it attracts.

Resiliency Initiative

How can you minimize the risks associated with posting or publishing online?

Understand that:
Many different people may read your posts, not just your intended audience, and some may perceive things differently than you do. Words and images can be powerful, and this can be extremely positive (you have a successful campaign) or negative (people are upset or hurt). Once you publish online, your words and images may be shared or used by others in different contexts.

Before posting, always ask yourself:
Is the information you are sharing factually correct and current? Research and consult with experts where possible.

Ask yourself these additional questions:
- Are you relying on common stereotypes or inaccurate assumptions? This is easy to do, but it could reinforce rather than break down barriers.
- How will your audience respond to this message? If you're unsure, test it out!
- How could this message be perceived by others outside of your community or target audience? Again, test your message on someone outside your organization!
- Could your post be taken out of context? You may have a valid point to make, but how does it relate to events and other factors present in the environment around you?
- Are you prepared to monitor and curate the responses to your content?

Always keep "Do No Harm" in mind and do a final check before posting. Just being aware of this principle will help you avoid many potential social media pitfalls.

Worksheet: Step-by-Step Guide
to Develop your Social Media Strategy

Define your communication objective

Begin by asking a very important question:

- What is the key challenge facing my community?
  (This is your problem statement)

- What do I want to communicate?
  (This is your communication objective)

Make your communication objective as measurable and specific as possible by asking more questions.

- How will I know I have succeeded?

- What targets or metrics can prove that I have achieved my objective?

- What is the time frame for achieving this objective?

Use these thought-starters to define your objectives:

Awareness – build knowledge and understanding of a certain topic.
For example:
I want to build knowledge about (issue x)

Action – join, visit, sign up, attend, participate, support.
For example:
I want people to sign up for our newsletter.
I want people to sign our pledge/petition.
I want people to donate.

Engagement – change behavior or beliefs.
For example:
I want to show how dangerous drunk driving is so people will stop driving drunk.
I want to challenge community beliefs about (x) so they will stop rejecting people with (x).

> *Important Tip:*
> *The more specific and measurable you make your communication objectives, the more focused and effective your communications will be. What actions or behavior changes do you want to inspire in your audience? Your communication objective is not just the number of posters or leaflets you produce. Stay focused. One clear objective would be great!*

Here is an example of a communication objective:
to foster better community relations.

A refined communication objective could be:
to foster better community relations between youth and elders in order to reduce incidents of physical and verbal elder-abuse in the community in the next two years.

State your initial communication objective:

>

State your refined communication objective:

>

Target Audience –
who do you want to communicate with?

Identifying who you need to communicate with is key to effective communication. "Everyone" is not a target audience. It's too broad. You need to be more specific so that your communication will be noticed by the right people.

Think of how fashion is advertised. The clothes are presented in a way that makes a connection with certain people, not everyone. That would be too broad. Certain styles or fabrics may not work in certain climates, don't appeal to certain people, or don't fit their budgets. Companies need to know who the clothes are for before they can design an effective advertising campaign.

Define your target audience by age, gender, location, employment, marital and family status, and other relevant demographics.

For example:
My target audience is unemployed youth between the ages of 18 and 25 living in city X.

State your target audience here.

> *My target audience is*

Now consider how your target audience thinks, feels, and acts. It is important to understand their habits and attitudes so you can truly connect with them by using the right messages.

For example:
They think they will never get a job. They act in a reckless way, because they think their life will be short.

> *My target audience thinks/feels/acts…*

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How will you engage your audience?

Use the *"3Ms"* to engage with your audience.
- **Message**
- **Messenger**
- **Medium**

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Your message
What is the one thing you want to say to your target audience?
(Use what you know about how the audience thinks and feels to find the best way to talk to them.)

Important Tip:
Your key message should be clear and succinct. Will your message reso-nate with the audience? Can you make it more appealing? Consider the language, tone, and context. It shouldn't be condescending or insensitive. Some words can take on positive or negative connotations with different audiences, cultures, and contexts.

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The messenger
Choose a good messenger to help you reach your target audience. Who do you think can most effectively convey your message? The messenger needs to be known and respected by your audience. You can feature them in both online and offline communication.

Credible voices might include:
- Respected organizations.
- Individuals your target audience respects, like sports stars, musicians, or actors.
- Respected faith, community, or youth leaders.

Who will be the best messenger for your project, and how can they help?
List some ideas for messengers here:

The medium
The best medium (channel or system of communication) for your organization is the one that your audience uses. "Medium" means both the type of platform (app) and the type of content on that platform.

Platforms
You need to consider which platforms your target audience uses so you can use them too.

Content
Consider what type of content suits your target audience.
    Video: short clips or animations
    Texts: slogans, hashtags, or open letters
    Images: photos, memes
    Audio: podcasts or short audio clips
    Comics: short panels or animations

Research what communication tools and content your audience prefers through surveys, interviews, or even direct observation. You will also need to consider your resources and budget. Which channels or platforms are the best to reach this audience? What kind of content will be easily accessible, shareable, and interesting to them?

Make a short list here of the platforms your audience uses and the type of content you can create.

"Do No Harm" considerations
What sensitivities exist in your community that you need to be aware of? Is there anything in your communication that could trigger these sensitivities? Check with others, both within and outside your community, to make sure you have thought of everything. You also need to check that your content is accurate and based on evidence.

List sensitive issues here:
For example:
certain words, topics, images, symbols, or even colors.

Your complete social media communication strategy

Bringing it all together. Use the answers you have identified above to fill in the form below.

Problem Statement:
(My key challenge is…)

Communication Objective:
(I want my communication to…)

Target Audience:
(Write a summary of who they are and what they think and feel.)

Key Message:
(What I want to say to my audience is…)

Messenger(s):
(List up to three messengers.)

Medium (platforms, content type):
(Pick your top two platforms and 3-4 content types.)

"Do No Harm" considerations:
(Remember to get a second opinion)

Congratulations! You have a strategy. Revisit this process at least once a year to assess what you have learned, what has changed, and how your strategy can be further improved. This strategy may evolve over time to reflect changes both within your organization and outside in the wider community.

The Resiliency Initiative

The Resiliency Initiative portal empowers local communities in the Asia-Pacific with digital tools to combat hate, violence, and conflict within and beyond their networks. The broader Resiliency Initiative, a partnership between The Asia Foundation and Facebook, works at the local level to build resilient communities across the Asia-Pacific region.

Visit the site at:
www.resilliencyinitiative.org

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