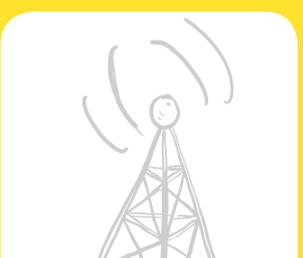
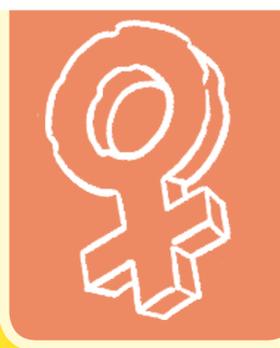
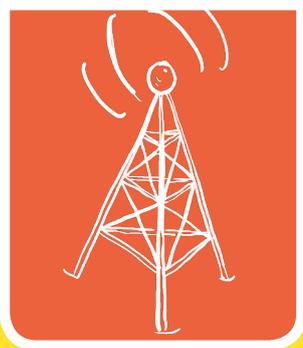
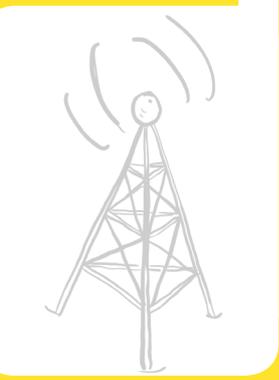


#DEFYHATENOW

FIELD GUIDE

Social Media Hate Speech Mitigation Ethiopia

SECOND EDITION 2025



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Foreword



As a storyteller and champion of digital rights, digital inclusion, and civic participation in Africa, I sincerely appreciate how identity shapes our choices, allegiances, and communities. Working with the media, civil society actors, and youths has revealed how identity can provide pride, belonging, and a purpose. It can separate, exclude, and instigate irreparably when misused intentionally or ignorantly. In times of peace, identity strengthens the social fabric, and in times of conflict, it is like a dagger meant to tear apart and weaponise a people.

The #defyhatenow Social Media Hate Speech Mitigation Field Guide becomes apparent as Ethiopia struggles to coexist in a suddenly internet-centred world. The concept of identity and questions on media information literacy elicit deeply personal and political questions at the nexus of conflict, online and offline.

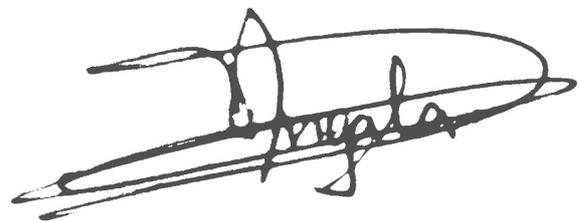
The field guide does not shy away from the nuances this complexity brings. It explores how identity is formed from birth, through family, community, culture, religion, language, and education - all of which are, in this age, shaped by the undeniable influence of social media and the internet. It draws connections between the arts and peacebuilding, opening a hopeful path to mitigating GBV while also addressing questions related to mental

health. A key component of this approach is its acknowledgement of the different actors and resources needed to promote peace. The guide emphasises community leaders (elders, faith leaders, youth leaders) and media and information literacy as a panacea for identifying hate speech, misinformation, and incitement, especially in today's digital world, where online harms have real-life consequences.

Youth are more empowered than ever on the internet, so they must use it for good. According to the handbook, they are active agents of change with an exceptional capacity to drive dialogue and reimagine inclusive futures. Art has traditionally provided an undiluted medium for trauma healing, self-expression, and empathy after conflict. Theatre, storytelling, music, and visual art are creative practices and spaces beyond just outlets. They are essential tools for reconciliation and rebuilding fractured communities.

Local knowledge, digital accountability, and community resilience against hate and disinformation have been central to #defyhatenow's priorities. This guide

enhances this effort by giving context and the ideal stakeholder solutions. Peacebuilders, teachers, journalists, artists, community organisers, and 'just' concerned citizens should view this guide as an invitation, not a manual—a table for reflection, discussion, and meaningful action. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr Ngala', written over a horizontal line.

***Dr Ngala Desmond Ngala,
CEO, Civic Watch Cameroon and
#defyhatenow
Country Project Manager,
Cameroon***

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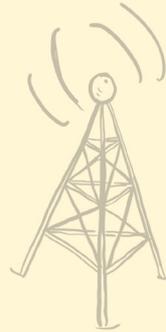
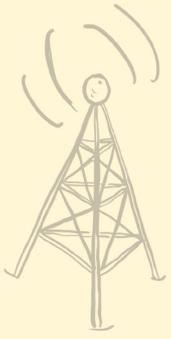
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01

Identity



Understanding Identity in the Context of Peace and Conflict



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Chapter Objective

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to understand how identity is tied to ethnicity, religion, language, and region, shaping how people perceive themselves and others, and how these identities shift in different contexts.

Additionally, you will learn how this affects the dynamics of peace and conflict. Tools like the Social Identity Wheel will show you how our many identities overlap. At the same time, the Pyramid of Hate will remind you that small biases, like stereotypes or jokes, can escalate into violence if ignored. Peacebuilding means acknowledging past injustices, promoting inclusive narratives, and creating spaces for dialogue. By recognising the power of identity and addressing biases early, we can work toward reconciliation and a more peaceful future.

1. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

Identity refers to the unique set of characteristics, beliefs, and traits that define a person or group, encompassing personal and social aspects, and shaping how individuals perceive themselves and others.

It has subjective (what we conceive ourselves to be) and objective elements (who you are in light of specific biological or social facts about you). It encompasses cultural, ethnic, national, religious, gender,



and socio-economic dimensions. Identity influences behaviours, interactions, and societal structures. In the Ethiopian context, identity has often been a source of unity and division, playing a significant role in historical and recent conflicts.

2. IDENTITY AND ITS FORMATION

Identity is dynamic and multifaceted. A person or group can simultaneously embody multiple identities. Simplifying identity to a single factor overlooks the complexity of human experiences.

As children, we quickly categorise people into specific groups. We learn who is part of our group and who is an outsider. The following scenarios illustrate how we intentionally or inadvertently develop the “us vs them” habit, which shapes our perceptions and actions with others.

- There are those who are part of our family group, and there are those who are not.
- There are the children we play with and the children we do not.
- There are people from our village and those from other villages.
- Some people are part of our religion, while others belong to a different one.
- There are people we consider intelligent, and others we believe are not.

The list goes on.

We constantly create these groups in our heads: us and them, and other people.

Religions, nationalities, tribes, and languages all work to create and reinforce this way of seeing the world. This way of thinking comes easily. While loving one's group identity is right, ostracising others based on their differing identities could create tension and conflict between individuals or groups. Why? Because it is easier to mistreat people if we think they are very different from and unlike us or our group.

But there is good news. The more we reflect on our own and others' identities, the more we realise our commonalities beyond the differences. That means we don't have to accept the us-versus-them way of thinking. Instead, we can focus on what we have in common and embrace our diversity.

HIGHLIGHT: The more we can see our similarities and shared humanity, the more we can live peacefully by appreciating existing diversities.

Consider the following personas and reflect on the follow-up discussion questions that follow.

- **Person A:** Female Muslim, software engineering student known for peaceful online activism, living in a border town between Afar and Tigray.
 - **Person B:** Male lecturer fluent in six languages, including Amharic, Afaan Oromoo, and Tigrinya.
 - **Person C:** Pan-African human rights activist residing in Dessie
 - **Person D:** University professor originally from Gambella, living in Harar for 15 years.
 - **Person E:** Born and raised in Cherkos, Addis Ababa, speaks only Amharic.
- **Person F:** From Bole, Addis Ababa, speaks Amharic and Guragegna.
 - **Person G:** From Yeka, Addis Ababa, fluent in Afaan Oromoo and Amharic.
 - **Person H:** Djiboutian diplomat living between Dire Dawa and Djibouti City.
 - **Person I:** Somali refugee in Bole Medhanialem for 20 years, speaks limited Amharic.
 - **Person J:** Born and raised in Welega, living in Nekemte.
 - **Person K:** Ethiopian returnee from the UK after 35 years

DISCUSSION POINTS:

- What shared values do the characters have?
- What characteristics define them?
- How can they better define themselves?

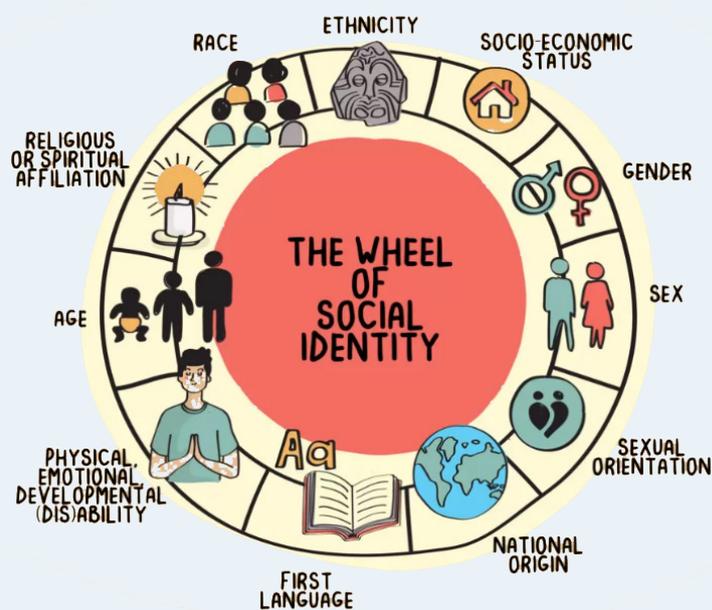
BONUS: *Take 5 minutes to think about your identity and how you can describe yourself in one sentence; what would you prioritise?*

- Is identity fixed or variable?
- Brainstorming questions: Is ethnicity a given identity or a chosen identity? What about gender?

2.1 Identity and Its Formation

The social identity tool helps you understand that identity comprises multiple intersecting elements. Recognising shared aspects of identity can foster understanding and reduce conflict.

By thinking of identity not as a single thing, but as composed of many things, we can more easily find similarities with others, including those we often think of as not belonging to our group.



The diagram features a circle divided into sections, each representing a potential aspect of our identity. Of course, many things make up our identities, but these are some common elements.

Social Identity Wheel

EXERCISE

- **Individual Reflection:** Participants complete their Social Identity Wheel, noting their ethnicity, religion, language, social status, age, and gender.
- **Group Discussion:** In small groups, participants share which elements matter most to their identity and identify commonalities among them.
- **Debrief:** Discuss how focusing on shared identities can reduce divisions and promote peace.
- **Refresh:** What should be considered when defining identity?

2.2 Additional resources

Identity, self-identification, community identification, culture, ethnicity, conflict, intergenerational conflict, social conflict, ethnification of identity



Ethnic Identity and Conflict

Elements of Identity in Conflict

Culture and Conflict

3. IDENTITY AND CONFLICT

History and Context

Ethiopia's ethnic federalism, established after the Derg regime's fall in 1991, appears to have been motivated by the problem of finding an appropriate state structure that could be used as an instrument of managing the complex ethno-linguistic diversity of the country and reducing conflicts.¹

This system of governance emerged following decades of political struggles by ethnically organised groups seeking self-determination and representation. According to the preamble of the Transitional Charter of the Transitional Government of

Ethiopia (1991), "self-determination of all the peoples shall be [one of] the governing principles of political, economic and social life" henceforth. It underlined the need to end all hostilities, heal (ethnic) wounds, and create peace and stability.²

Divergent perspectives exist regarding the efficacy and impact of ethnic federalism in the Ethiopian socio-political landscape. One line of argument is that ethnic federalism has addressed some pressing needs of different ethnic groups, such as the right to self-administration, cultural and political representation, and decentralisation of power as a way for democratisation. Others argue that ethnic federalism has, among other things, exacerbated identity-based conflicts in the country by overemphasising differences over shared identities.

In Ethiopia's reality today, conflict has manifested at various levels, including interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, and international levels. Multiple factors have driven this, including competition for resources, ideological differences, historical grievances, power imbalances, and perceived threats to identity.

LEARN MORE: Federalism is a system of government in which power is shared between a central authority and smaller regional governments. Federalism allows regions to govern some of their affairs, such as decisions regarding education or working languages, while being part of the larger country. Federal states include Argentina, Canada, Germany, and South Africa.

3.1 Ethnification of Identity

Many claim that adopting ethnic federalism has led to a greater emphasis on ethnic identities over national identity, a phenomenon referred to as the Ethnification of identity.

Here are some ways that this can be seen in Ethiopia:

- Younger generations are more likely to identify with their ethnic group than with their national identity.
 - Ethnicity has become the dominant mobilisation and association factor for many political and some social groupings.
-

3.2 Ethnic Federalism and Conflict

While ethnic federalism aimed to empower marginalised communities and reduce conflict, it has, in many ways, contributed to the escalation of inter-group/ethnic conflicts. ***Here are some scenarios illustrating how ethnic federalism has directly or indirectly been implicated in conflicts.***

- Identity-based conflicts, paired with political and social polarisations, have escalated in the past decades, leading to violence and the displacement of millions of Ethiopians. Over half of the 4.4 million internally displaced people in Ethiopia left their homes due to conflict.³
- There has been a significant rise in the ethnification of politics, with most major political parties in the country organised along ethnic lines. This division has led to mutual suspicion and instilled ethnic dynamics that could spiral out of control.
- There has been an increasing narrative of “insiders” vs “outsiders” based on the primordial definition of ethnicity, leading to polarisation, discrimination, and sometimes violence between or against “settler” people in several locations, undermining their political rights.
- The system has created competition for state resources along ethnic lines, leading to conflicts over territorial boundaries and economic resources.

ASK: In other ways, has Ethnic Federalism contributed to peace or conflict in Ethiopia? Share from a more personal perspective, whether at home, in school, or at work.

3.3 Identity to Conflict

Ethnic identity refers to an individual's sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group, based on shared characteristics like cultural heritage, historical experiences, nationality, religion, language, or geographical residence. In the Ethiopian

context, ethnic identity has become a primary lens through which access to resources, political representation, and social status is viewed. The overemphasis on ethnicity has not only heightened intergroup competition but has also advanced exclusionary practices, where individuals are categorised as “insiders” or “outsiders” within their regions. Some argue that ethnic conflict cannot be blamed

on ethnicity, but rather on the politicisation of ethnic identity by self-seeking politicians.⁵ This structural framework has contributed to localised conflicts, boundary disputes, and a growing alienation among minority groups.

In recent years, Ethiopia has witnessed significant conflicts fueled by identity-related grievances. Historical reinterpretations, competition for scarce resources, and political mobilisation based on ethnic lines have exacerbated tensions. The rise of social media has further amplified these divisions, providing a platform for hate speech and inflammatory rhetoric that escalates conflicts.

3.4 Prejudice

Societies are often composed of different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups. Sometimes, these groups feel like they do not fit together. In most cases, these are due to historical reasons, the legacy of colonialism, or more recent events. Tension can lead to conflicts.

We are often aware of the elements of our identities targeted by another group in society. Our identities can feel challenged or threatened in one-on-one interactions, as well as on a more significant regional and national level.

So we are socialised to like people in our group and not like people from other groups. This behaviour is called bias, prejudice for or against a person or group.

Gordon Allport, a renowned psychologist, demonstrated that prejudice can be viewed as a series of increasingly severe actions. These actions range from simple acts of not liking someone to avoidance, exclusion, physical violence, and even genocide.

If we look at examples of genocide in the 20th century, we see how acts of bias can escalate to genocide over just a few years. Observing how bias can escalate reminds us why we must address seemingly harmless acts of bias as soon as they occur.

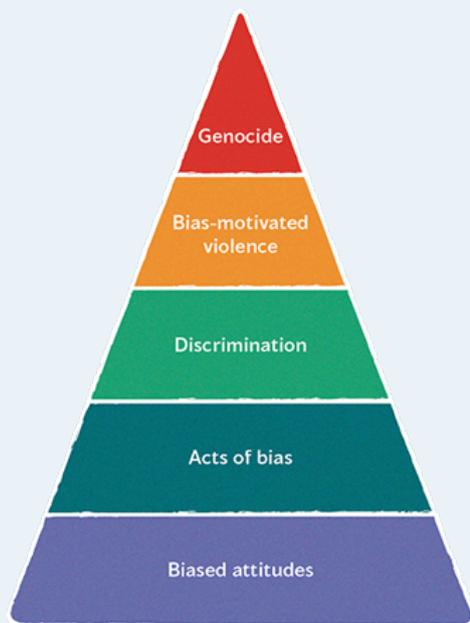
When thinking about prejudice, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Prejudice is a learned behaviour that can be unlearned.
- A practical method for addressing prejudice is to focus on individuals rather than groups and seek commonalities.
- People who feel good about themselves do not need to attack others. The more we can show kindness and gentleness towards ourselves, the more we can show it to others.

3.5 The Pyramid of Hate

The Pyramid of Hate shows how negative behaviours grow in complexity from the bottom to the top. Although the behaviours at each level negatively impact individuals and groups, as one moves up the pyramid, the consequences become increasingly life-threatening.

Like a pyramid, the upper levels are supported by the lower levels. If people or institutions treat behaviours on the lower levels as acceptable or “normal,” the behaviours at the next level become more accepted.



The Pyramid of Hate illustrates how violence and genocide are acts that build upon the acceptance of negative behaviours, such as discrimination and bullying, described in the lower levels of the pyramid.

The Pyramid of Hate

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

It is essential to acknowledge that we have all, to some extent, participated in the Pyramid of Hate. ***The more honest we can be about our past actions and the more we reflect on them, the better we are at defying hate and spreading kindness and peace.***

- What actions can you admit to having done at the different levels?
- What could you do to make up for them?
- Could you vow not to do them again?
 - ° *Could you vow not to do them again?*
 - ° *Could you apologise to someone you have harmed?*
 - ° *What other options can you think of to help spread peace?*
 - ° *How does your upbringing, culture, and religion contribute to your biased experience?*

3.6 Causes of Identity-Related Conflicts in Ethiopia

- Competition for state resources along ethnic lines often leads to disputes over land, water, and economic opportunities.
- Manipulating ethnicity as an instrument for political mobilisation, where leaders use ethnic identity to garner support and consolidate power.
- Recurring conflicts over territorial boundaries, as certain regions/communities claim historical or cultural ties to contested areas.
- Subordinated citizenship rights to ethnicity, creating categories of “titular” and “non-titular” peoples within regions, often marginalising minorities.
- Polarisations due to conflicting historiographical narratives, leading to the rewiring and reinterpretation of clan histories to reshape their political significance.

NOTE: Studies show that in ethnically polarised countries, ethnic group loyalty induces citizens to vote for their ethnic party, which increases ethnic grievance and the probability of civil war.

Case Study: Identity-Based Conflict

K, an Ethiopian returnee from the UK, travelled to Dire Dawa to visit his old friend, H. While waiting at a local coffee shop near H’s residence, K met Pan-African activist C. Their casual conversation turned heated when they discussed the UK government’s recent policy of deporting illegal migrants to Rwanda. Both K and C held opposing views, and the argument escalated.

Dr. D, a university professor on a short work trip to Dire Dawa, was also at the coffee shop. Overhearing the debate, Dr. D joined in, expressing support for the UK government's decision. K was further aggravated and began to belittle Dr. D, calling him "Bareya" (a derogatory term). The verbal dispute quickly turned physical.

H arrived at the scene and attempted to intervene, but in the chaos, he was accidentally struck by Dr. D. Tragically, H succumbed to his injuries and died later that day in the hospital.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Root Causes:** What underlying factors contributed to the escalation of this conflict?
- **Issues:** How did identity, historical grievances, and stereotypes play a role?
- **Impact:** What were the immediate and long-term consequences of this incident?
- **Conflict Management:** If you were K, C, or Dr. D, how could you have de-escalated the situation?
- **Lessons Learned:** What strategies can communities adopt to prevent such conflicts in the future?

LEARN MORE: Conflict analysis is the systematic study of the profile, causes, actors, and dynamics of conflict. When encountering any dispute, we should not rush to determine the form of intervention without understanding its nature, cause, actors, etc, by conducting proper conflict analysis.⁷

4. IDENTITY, PEACE BUILDING, AND RECONCILIATION

4.1 The Role of Meaningful Inter-Group Dialogue

Meaningful dialogue between groups, especially communities of different religions, beliefs, or cultural backgrounds, can help lower tensions or suspicions.

A lack of meaningful intergroup communication and isolation from each other are often identified as significant contributing factors to intergroup tensions. These situations make hostility, discrimination, hate speech, and incitement to violence more likely – this is especially true when there is a history of escalated intergroup tensions.

Hypothetical Story⁸

Read the following story and discuss the limitations and potential of the dialogue session.

In a specific post-conflict social context, a youth group organised a community dialogue through their peace club. The club invited representatives from each section of the community as conflicting parties. All the invited participants were so angry that they entered the dialogue to express their victimhood and injustice, levelling allegations against the other groups in the room. All recalled the violent experience because of the action and inaction of the other group. None of them were ready to listen to the experience of their counterpart. Participants spoke without listening to one another for the entire day. The session agitated participants due to the behaviour of other participants and the use of both verbal and non-verbal communication. The first day of the dialogue session concluded in this manner.

QUESTION: Do you think a genuine dialogue occurred? If not, what was the problem? Discuss in pairs and share your thoughts.

Dialogue can help de-escalate tensions.

Dialogue must provide the space for a genuine, rather than symbolic, exchange of views to be effective. There must also be space to discuss differences and disagreements. Dialogue should also be inclusive, allowing for community representation beyond traditional leaders. It is essential to bring the voices of women, girls, youth, and displaced/minority communities to the forefront.

Dialogue and Reconciliation

By creating a safe and inclusive space for dialogue, reconciliation processes can be facilitated, leading to the rebuilding of relationships, the establishment of common ground, addressing past injustices and injuries, and the development of shared visions for the future.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Have you ever participated in an intergroup dialogue?
- Could you imagine working to bring together different groups to engage in a meaningful discussion of how to support peace?
- What small step could you take to engage in intergroup dialogue?
 - *Could you reach out to just one other person outside your group and start on a personal level?*
 - *Could you start a program at a local school or church, where people could come together to meet and talk?*
 - *What other ideas can you think of that would help promote open dialogue?*
- Why is it essential to create a space where people can talk safely, respectfully, and freely?

Who Should Be Involved in Dialogue?

One of the fundamental principles of any dialogue initiative is its inclusiveness. To succeed, all those engaged in and affected by conflict (e.g., armed groups, institutions, and individuals), including their interests, goals, capacities, and relationships, must be invited to the dialogue table. Actors in dialogue include community leaders, elders, religious leaders, women, local government structures, armed groups, and youth.

4.2 The Role of Community Leaders

Community and religious leaders have the potential to influence the lives and behaviours of others. When they speak out, their messages can have a significant impact. That is why leaders have an essential role to play in speaking out against hate speech and violence.

Success story: The role of elders in averting ethnic violence



A relatively recent success story in Ethiopia was when elders from Gamo and ethnic groups deescalate tension in Arba Minich city and stop protestors who wanted to attack the Oromo owned shops and properties to revenge the Burayu ethnic conflict that happened on September 17, 2018, where

dozens of people from Gamo, Oromo and other ethnic groups were killed. In this conflict, thousands were displaced from the Burayu area, located in the Oromo region of Ethiopia, just outside the capital, Addis Ababa. As youth groups in Arba Minch, Gamo Gofa, in Western part of Ethiopia made a move to retaliate the attack targeting Oromo business in Arab Minch, Gamo elders intervened holding freshly cut grass on their hands and kneeling on the ground to beg the youth not to attack Oromo business, the elders averted the violence. Many Ethiopians were inspired by the wisdom of Gamo elders and cited as a success story by many. (UNESCO, 2020)

- Spread messages of peace, tolerance, acceptance, and mutual respect.
 - Take action to reduce tensions between communities, particularly by fostering dialogue and hosting events that promote peaceful coexistence.
 - Disseminate positive messages online and offline. When possible, spread these messages of peace in local languages, including regional dialects.
 - Issue and circulate reports of religious, community, and ethnic statements and decrees by leaders and authorities denouncing incitement and/or offering alternative messages.
 - Engage youth and have them try to constructively and peacefully address injustice.
 - Listen to and address youths' grievances, even when what they say is shocking or controversial.
 - Identify and train "youth ambassadors" to become dedicated actors and peer educators in countering radicalisation and violent extremism.
-

4.3 Policy Recommendations

- **Education:** Promote awareness of Ethiopia's diverse identities and shared history.
- **Dialogue Platforms:** Create spaces for intergroup communication and understanding.
- **Hate Speech Regulation:** Strengthen enforcement of laws against hate speech and discrimination.
- **Technology Integration:** Utilise digital tools for early conflict detection and resolution.
- **Support Traditional Mechanisms:** Strengthen and modernise traditional conflict resolution practices.

02

Media and information disorder



Understanding the contribution of the media in conflict



Content

- 34 | Media and information literacy
- 38 | Hate speech and countering hate speech
- 45 | Information disorder and fact-checking

In the previous chapter, we examined the concept of identity. We learned how identity shapes our world and how our experiences shape our worldviews, internally and externally. The next question is, how does the media influence us? We will work towards countering hate speech and spreading messages of peace and reconciliation.

By the end of this chapter, you will understand how media shapes public perception and contributes to peace or conflict, particularly in the Ethiopian context. You'll learn the differences between traditional and new media, and how media and information literacy (MIL) equips you with the skills to access, analyse, create, reflect on, and act on media content responsibly. The chapter examines the impact of hate speech and dangerous speech, offering tools such as the Hate Speech Framework and insights into Ethiopia's legal response. You'll discover how to recognise and counter various forms of information disorder—disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation—through fact-checking, critical thinking, and the use of open-source tools. Overall, this knowledge allows you to challenge harmful narratives, promote inclusive dialogue, and contribute to a more informed and peaceful society.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is media?

In general, “media” refers to the communication outlets or tools to store and deliver information or data.

Media is the primary means of mass communication, using platforms such as broadcasting, publishing, and the internet. In its simplest



form, media refers to a means of communication, such as radio, television, newspapers, magazines, and the internet, that reaches or influences a broad audience.

1.2 Traditional Media Vs New Media

Traditional media encompasses the conventional means of mass communication that have been established over the years, including print newspapers, television, radio, and physical books. It has long been the primary source of news and entertainment. Some examples of traditional media outlets in Ethiopia include Sheger FM radio, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (including Ethiopian Television, ETV), and The Reporter newspaper.

New media refers to modern forms of communication and technology, including the Internet, social media, mobile devices, virtual reality, and other digital platforms. It has significantly transformed the media landscape, altering how we consume and interact with content. Some examples of new media outlets in Ethiopia include TIKVAH-Ethiopia (a Telegram-based news media platform), DireTube (a Facebook-based news media platform), and Ethiopia Insider (a News website).

Features of Traditional Media

- One-way Communication
- Limited Interactivity
- Physical Format
- Scheduled Distribution
- Localised Reach
- Production Costs
- Professional Gatekeepers
- Longevity and Permanence
- Limited Analytics
- Offline Consumption

Features of New Media

- Interactivity
- Accessibility
- Global Reach
- Multimedia Integration
- Real-time Communication
- User-generated Content
- Personalisation
- Virality and Shareability
- Constant Evolution
- Integration of Virtual and Real Worlds

In conclusion, traditional media shapes public opinion and policy through authoritative reporting on their channels. In contrast, new media amplify diverse voices and real-time engagement, quickly influencing societal views and decisions. Together, they play complementary roles in shaping societal opinions and conclusions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What kind of media outlets do you know besides the ones mentioned?
- What media outlets do you use to get information, and what factors influence which media outlets you trust or use the most?
 - **ASK:** Take 5 minutes to note down the factors that influence the type of media they trust/use
 - Credibility and accuracy, transparency and objectivity, reputation, accessibility, political or ideological, engagement and content, peer influence

- What are some examples of traditional media outlets?
 - *Traditional media includes newspapers, magazines, radio, and television*
- What defines new media, and how does it differ from traditional media?
 - **BONUS:** *How has new media changed how people engage with news and information?*

1.3 The Internet and Social Media

What is the Internet?

The Internet is a global network that connects computers using the common language of TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol). This connection enables data to be split into packets, transmitted over data lines, and reassembled for the user. It supports various services like email, social media, and the World Wide Web. While the Internet is a vast network of networks, the World Wide Web (or simply the Web) is a system of hyperlinked pages and documents within the Internet.

WWW (World Wide Web) is a system of Internet servers that allows easy link navigation between documents. The Internet is a broader network, while the World Wide Web is a method for accessing information.

Who Owns the Internet?

DEBUNK: Ask the participants whether the statement “The internet is owned by one central organisation” is true or false.

No one owns the internet as a whole. It is a decentralised network, a “network of networks,” with individual companies and organisations owning their respective networks, all interconnected to form the internet. It is more a concept reliant on physical infrastructure than a single tangible entity.

What is Social Media?

Social media is an internet-based communication tool that facilitates online interaction among users and virtual communities. Since the 1990s, social media platforms have enhanced human networks and promoted connectedness. Social media platforms must allow participation and interaction. Some of the top social media platforms used in 2025 are **Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, WeChat, Telegram, and Snapchat.**

Functions of Social Media:

Social media applications allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. They enable users, like you and me, to consume and publish content, engage in dialogue, and interact in real time, regardless of physical location.

Social network sites allow individuals to:

- Construct a public or semi-public profile
- Articulate a list of connections
- View and traverse their list of connections and those made by others

In many countries, social media platforms like Facebook have become primary sources of information, surpassing traditional media. They are integrated platforms combining various media and communication technologies, making them preferable to mainstream media.

LEARN MORE: A term referred to as “Citizen Journalism” involves ordinary people reporting news through online platforms and social media. It offers diverse perspectives and immediate coverage, but may raise concerns about accuracy and reliability. For example, a TikTok influencer covering different issues from the ground.

Impact on Society:

Social media has both positive and negative impacts. The most common ones are:

- Increased Connectivity: Social media helps people stay in touch with friends and family, regardless of distance.
- Information Sharing: It facilitates the rapid dissemination of news and information.
- Community Building: Users can form and join online communities with shared interests or causes.
- Social Movements: It can amplify social and political movements, raising awareness and mobilising action.
- Economic Opportunities: Offers platforms for businesses and entrepreneurs to expand into new audiences and markets
- Mental Health Effects: Can impact mental health, leading to issues like anxiety, addiction, depression, and low self-esteem due to comparisons and cyberbullying.
- Privacy Concerns: Raises issues about data security and personal privacy.
- Misinformation Spread: Can facilitate the rapid spread of misinformation
- Cultural Exchange: Promotes the global exchange of cultural ideas and practices.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are the purposes for which you use the Internet?
 - *I use the internet to read news and stay informed about current events*
 - *For educational purposes, such as online courses, research, or tutorials*
 - *To communicate with family and friends through email, messaging apps, and video calls*
 - *Entertainment, including streaming music, watching videos, or playing online games*
 - *For work and business activities, such as remote jobs, freelancing, and marketing*
 - **BONUS:** *Divide participants into small groups and assign each one a different purpose (e.g., education, business, entertainment). Have them discuss the advantages and risks of using the internet in that area.*

- What kind of personal social media accounts do you have?
 - **ASK:** *Ask participants to list all the social media platforms they use. As a group, categorise them by function (e.g., networking, news, entertainment, activism)*

2. MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY (MIL)

Approaches to understanding literacy have undergone gradual changes over the last few decades.

Literacy is no longer viewed as simply the ability to read, write, count, and comprehend language. With this change, media and information literacy have also played a critical role.

MIL combines knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices required to access, analyse, evaluate, use, produce, and communicate information and knowledge in creative, legal and ethical ways that respect human rights.

NOTE: MIL fosters critical thinking skills, enabling individuals to question, analyse, and challenge media representations and narratives.

2.1 Elements of Media and Information Literacy

Access refers to the process of locating, retrieving, and obtaining information and media content from various sources and platforms. It involves understanding how to utilise multiple technologies, such as computers, smartphones, and libraries, to find relevant information efficiently. Access also includes recognising barriers to information access, such as socioeconomic factors or technological limitations.

By this definition, accessing media extends beyond the availability of technology, devices, and the Internet; it requires an in-depth understanding of the media, how it works, and how to use it effectively.

Analysis: Analysis involves critically examining media messages and information sources to understand their purpose, perspective, and potential biases. It entails breaking down complex media content into its constituent parts, identifying underlying themes, messages, and rhetorical strategies that content creators use. Analysis also involves evaluating the credibility and reliability of sources, distinguishing between fact and opinion, and recognising the influence of cultural, social, and ideological factors on media content.

The five key questions for analysing media content

- Who created this message? (Authorship)
- What creative techniques are used to attract my attention? (Format)
- How might different people understand this message differently from me? (Audience)

- What values and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message? (Content)
- Why is this message being sent? (Purpose)
- **Note:** This element is crucial as it dictates the subsequent steps.

Creation: Creation involves producing and sharing media content effectively and responsibly. It encompasses various forms of media production, including writing, photography, video editing, graphic design, and multimedia storytelling. Creation also involves understanding copyright laws, ethical considerations, and the potential impact of media content on audiences and society.

Key questions for creating meaningful content

- Is this a fact, my opinion, or something else?
- What are my sources of information?
- How might different people understand this message differently?
- Who might benefit from or be harmed by this message?
- What actions do I want people to take in response to this message?
- What ideas, values, information, or points of view are implied?
- What is left out that might be important to know?

Reflection: Reflecting on media content is key to media literacy, helping individuals critically assess messages and recognise biases. Media shapes our beliefs and attitudes, so reflection lets us understand its influence and question any underlying agendas. It also helps us understand how the content has affected us emotionally or in any other aspect.

Thoroughly analysing content before reflecting helps identify essential insights, making it easier to draw informed conclusions.

Action: Media-literate individuals make informed decisions after carefully analysing and reflecting on a media message. They may choose to take action responsibly and constructively. Taking action may involve sharing accurate information with others, participating in meaningful dialogue or advocacy efforts related to the message, or taking concrete steps to address issues raised.

Case Study 1:

የክንቴዎች ደምጽ
August 3 · 🌐

ዛሬ ሐምሌ 27 የክንቴ ከተማ ነዋሪ በኩሮ ውድነት ምክንያት እየደረሰበት ያለውን ጫና ለመንግስት ለማሰማት ሰልፍ የወጣ ቢሆንም ሰላማዊ ሰልፍ በወጡ ወጣቶች ላይ የክንቴ ፖሊስ አስለቃሽ ጭስ በመተኮስ እና ድብደባ በማድረግ ሰላማዊ ህዝብ ላይ ጥቃት ፈጽሟል። በጥቃቱም 3 የአክባቢው ወጣቶች ህይወታቸውን ያጡ ሲሆን በመቶዎች የሚቆጠሩ ቀላል እና ከባድ ጉዳት ደርሶባቸው ህክምና እየተደረገላቸው መሆኑን በክንቴ ሆስፒታል ተግኝቼ ከጤና ባለሙያዎቹ ያገኘውት መረጃ ያሳያል። ከዚያም በተጨማሪ 23 የሚሆኑ ወጣቶች መታሰራቸውንም አንዳንድ የወጣቶቹ ቤተሰቦች ደውለው አስታውቀውኛል።

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👍 ለሚ የክንቴ ልጅ and 5.2K Others 1K Comments

ክንቴ ሚዲያ ኔትዎር (KMN)
August 3 · 🌐

የክንቴ ነዋሪ ወጣቶች የድጋፍ ሰልፍ አደረጉ

ሐምሌ 27፣ 2008

የክንቴ ነዋሪዎች መንግስት እያከናወናቸው ባሉ የልማት ስራዎች ደስታቸውን ለመግለፅ የድጋፍ ሰልፍ አደረጉ። አንዳንድ የአክባቢው ነዋሪዎች ለክንቴ ሚዲያ ኔትዎር አንደገለፁት መንግስት እየደረገ ያለው ልማት ለአክባቢው እድገት አስተዋፅኦ ያለው በመሆኑ እንዲቅጥልበት እና ማህበረሰቡም ድጋፉን እንደሚቀጥል አስታውቀዋል።

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👍 5.2K 1.2K Comments

Context: A group of students regularly consume news from both traditional and new media outlets. They notice that two news channels report conflicting narratives on a political event.

Task:

- Analyse these news reports
- Compare the framing, agenda, and techniques used in both reports.
- How does each outlet influence the agenda through its narrative?
- What is the importance of accessing diverse sources to get a balanced view?
- Create your own balanced social media report based on the above contents
- Reflect on the five media literacy elements, ACCRA

3. HATE SPEECH AND COUNTERING HATE SPEECH

3.1 Hate Speech and Dangerous Speech

Hate Speech: According to the UN, it is defined as “any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language about a person or a group based on who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender or other identity factor”.



Dangerous Speech: Any form of expression (speech, text, or images) that can increase the risk that its audience will condone or participate in violence against members of another group.

The Ethiopian hate speech proclamation

ASK: What do you know about the Ethiopian Hate Speech law?

The Ethiopian “Hate Speech and Disinformation Prevention and Suppression Proclamation No.1185 /2020” defines Hate speech as “speech that deliberately promotes hatred, discrimination or attacks against a person or a discernible group of identity, based on ethnicity, religion, race, gender or disability.”

Under the law, hate speech occurs when:

- It deliberately incites hatred, discrimination, or violence.
- It targets a specific group based on factors such as ethnicity, religion, race, gender, or disability.

Hate speech is defined by intent, not by whether it causes violence or disturbances. Critics argue that terms like “hatred” and “discrimination” are unclear, leading to inconsistent application and potential suppression of free speech. The law’s preamble has been criticised for potentially restricting free expression under the guise of combating hate speech.

Penalties for hate speech:

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1/ Any person who commits acts proscribed under Article 4 shall be punished with simple imprisonment not exceeding two years or a fine not exceeding 100,000 birr.

2/ If an attack against a person or a group has been committed as a result of a hate speech, the punishment shall be simple imprisonment not exceeding from one year up to five years.

3/ Any person who commits acts proscribed under Article 5 shall be punished with simple imprisonment not exceeding one year or a fine not exceeding 50,000 birr.

4/ If the offense of hate speech or disinformation offense has been committed through a social media account having more than 5,000 followers or through a broadcast service or print media, the person responsible for the act shall be punished with simple imprisonment not exceeding three years or a fine not exceeding 100,000 birr.

5/ If violence or public disturbance occurs due to the dissemination of disinformation, the punishment shall be rigorous imprisonment from two year up to five years.

Up to 2 years in prison or a fine of up to 100,000 Birr. If it leads to violence, imprisonment ranges from 1 to 5 years. Hate speech or disinformation disseminated via social media or media channels can result in a prison term of up to 3 years and a fine of up to 100,000 Birr

Screenshot of the hate speech proclamation showing the penalties for violation of the law

3.2 The Hate Speech Framework

- **Message:** Is the content of the speech provocative directly or indirectly?
- **Speaker:** What is the speaker's place (level of influence) in the community?
- **Audience:** To whom was the speech addressed?
- **Medium:** Where is it spoken or shared? How accessible is it?
- **Context:** What's the social and historical context? Is the context in which the message is addressed intended to incite exclusion or violence? Is there an enabling situation where the speech could harm?

3.3 Indicators and Signs of Hate Speech

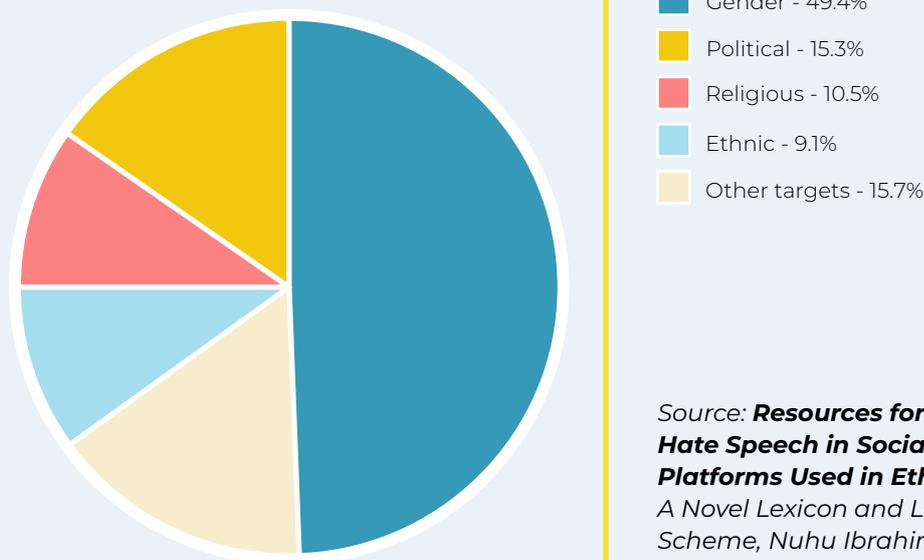
Abusive words/phrases: Often used in hate speech to reinforce stereotypes, stigmatise marginalised groups, and justify discrimination or violence. Here are some examples of abusive words and phrases commonly found in hate speech: Racial Slurs, Religious Insults, Sexist Language, Disability-Related Insults, Xenophobic or Nationalistic Language, Hateful Slogans or Chants

Dehumanisation: Speech that dehumanises individuals or groups by depicting them as less than human, often using language that portrays them as inherently evil, dangerous, or subhuman. Dehumanising speech can serve to justify violence or discrimination against the targeted group by reducing empathy and moral consideration for its members. For example, calling people snakes or hyenas

Ambiguous words or phrases may appear benign or innocuous on the surface but carry underlying meanings or connotations that target individuals or groups based on their identity or characteristics, for example, words like Junta.

Violence-inciting speech serves as a significant indicator of hate speech, as it directly encourages or condones acts of violence or harm against individuals or groups based on their identity or characteristics. This type of speech is hazardous because it can fuel hatred, intolerance, and discrimination, and it may contribute to real-world violence or human rights abuses. Most of the time, these speeches are direct calls for violence or threats. For example, words like Kill, attack

Targets of hate speech: The pie chart below shows, hate speech broken down by selected identity groups. The more targeted groups are women and girls (21%), closely followed by Ethnic Oromos (19.1%) and Ethnic Amharas (16.7%). Other targets of hate speech include Orthodox Christians (8.7%), men (5.9%) and Ethnic Tigrayans (5.5%). The 'additional hate targets' category in the pie chart is comprised of all the other target groups outside of the top 5 most prevalent targets; this includes protestants, white people, atheists, multiracial people and Jews. The 'other target' category was selected in cases where hate speech targeting a protected characteristic was present, but it does not fall under any of the categories.



Source: **Resources for Annotating Hate Speech in Social Media Platforms Used in Ethiopia: A Novel Lexicon and Labelling Scheme**, Nuhu Ibrahim, Felicity Mulford, Matt Lawrence and Riza Batista-Navarro

3.4 Spotting hate speech | Checklist

- Is it aiming at one of these (race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sex)?
- Does it have one of these characteristics (abusive, inciting violence, calling for action or having false information)?
- Does it push audiences to insult/shame, discriminate, sanction, or incite other hate speech?
- Does it encourage the audience to rebel, kill, loot, attack, displace, or call for other forms of physical violence?
- Does the audience have an optimised situation in which to take action?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever experienced hate speech targeted at you or others?
 - *Encourage participants to share their experiences while maintaining a respectful and safe discussion space.*
 - **Example:** *"During political discussions, I've heard derogatory remarks about certain communities."*
- What are indicators of hate speech?
 - *Use of abusive words, slurs, or derogatory phrases aimed at a specific group.*
 - *Calls for violence or exclusion against a particular ethnicity, religion, gender, or other identity factors.*
 - **BONUS:** *Present different speech samples (without real-world political references) and ask participants to determine whether they qualify as hate speech*

- What makes a speech dangerous or hate speech?
 - *Explain that not all hate speech leads to violence, but dangerous speech increases that risk.*
 - **ASK:** *Take 5 minutes to think about historical or recent conflicts in Ethiopia. Can you identify cases where dangerous speech contributed to violence?*

- What are the key questions to be asked to identify dangerous speech?
 - *Who is delivering the message, and do they influence people?"*
 - *What is the historical and social context? Is there existing conflict or tension?*
 - *How might the audience interpret this speech? Could it encourage violence?*

- What is the best mechanism to counter hate/ dangerous speech?
 - **BONUS:** *Role-play a situation where hate speech occurs online. Have participants practice responding with counter-speech techniques*

- Have you encountered any other methods to counter hate speech in your community?

3.5 Countering hate/dangerous speech

Counter and Alternative Narratives

Counter narratives directly respond to and challenge hateful messages by deconstructing and discrediting them with counterarguments and facts. In contrast, alternative narratives focus on fostering a positive and inclusive mindset, offering constructive ideas that encourage society, including those spreading hate speech, to consider new perspectives. Both strategies aim to promote positive discourse and undermine harmful narratives.

Here are the four most common alternative narratives:

Factual Alternative Narrative: This alternative narrative presents accurate, evidence-based information to counteract hate speech. It uses data, statistics, and credible sources to refute false claims and educate the audience.

Example: Providing accurate crime statistics to debunk false claims targeting an ethnic group labelled as a criminal ethnicity.

Moral Alternative Narrative: This narrative appeals to ethical and moral values, emphasising shared human values and empathy. It highlights the harmful effects of hate speech on individuals and society.

Example: Emphasising shared values of compassion and community service to counter hate speech against a targeted religion.

Humour and Sarcasm: Uses irony and exaggeration to criticise or mock hate speech, making it appear ridiculous. It engages the audience through humour and encourages reflection on the absurdity of hate speech.

Example: A satirical video that mocks the illogical nature of hate speech claims.

Positive Alternative Narrative: This narrative promotes positive stories and examples that counteract hate speech and promote a more inclusive perspective. It shares success stories and positive contributions of targeted groups to inspire and uplift.

Example: Highlighting the achievements of individuals with disabilities to counter negative stereotypes against disability.

By employing these countermeasures, individuals and communities can effectively challenge and reduce the impact of hate speech, fostering a more inclusive and respectful public discourse.

Case Study 2:



የከንቴዎች ድምጽ
Yesterday at 2:55am · 🌐

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#ከንቴነት_ይለምልም
#ተነሱ

ላሜ የከንቴ ልጅ and 4.6K Others · 1.9K Comments

Context: A viral social media post in Ethiopia falsely accuses a minority group of being mentally ill and trying to take the land of another ethnic group, leading to widespread online hate speech and offline violence. The content was posted on Facebook by a well-known social media influencer page in the community.

Task:

- Identify the hate speech within the post and spot the indicators
- Evaluate it using the Hate Speech Framework
- Discuss how the speech could potentially be dangerous and lead to violence.
- Develop a counter/alternative narrative

4. INFORMATION DISORDER AND FACT-CHECKING

4.1 Information Disorder

Information disorder refers to the unhealthy flow of information. These terms represent distinct but related phenomena:

Disinformation is false or misleading information spread to deceive or cause harm. It can appear as fabricated or deliberately manipulated audiovisual content, intentionally created conspiracy theories, or rumours spread to harm or cause distrust.

For example, when someone intentionally shares false information to gain personal or political benefit or shares the false information knowingly to harm others.

Misinformation: It is the sharing of false information without the intention to deceive or manipulate people.

For example, they may share a rumour or false information and believe it to be true. We can also categorise as misinformation unintentional mistakes, such as inaccurate photo captions, dates, statistics, and translations, or when satire is taken seriously.

Malinformation is the deliberate publication of private information for personal, corporate, or political gain, rather than in the public interest.

Examples include revenge porn, selectively leaked emails or documents, and doxing (releasing personal information with malicious intent). Malinformation often involves decontextualising truthful information to create a misleading or damaging narrative. While public figures may be targets, malinformation can affect anyone, especially those involved in controversial issues or targeted harassment campaigns.

NOTE: To simplify things, many use the term “disinformation” to refer to all three categories above.

4.2 Forms of disinformation

Disinformation can take many different forms. The most common ones are:



Satire or Parody

It has no intention of causing harm, but it has the potential to deceive. This information disorder can also easily be re-shared or distorted, functioning outside its original, humorous context.

The screenshot shows a satirical meme falsely claiming to depict a nuclear plant in Ethiopia. In reality, the image shows the distillation process of "Areqe," a local Ethiopian alcoholic beverage. Shared in the context of Russia's control of the largest nuclear power plant in Ukraine, the meme became a topic of discussion on social media. (See fact-checking article by PesaCheck for more information.)



False Connection

It occurs when headlines, visuals, or captions fail to support the content. Although we may initially think that false connections, such as clickbait headlines, can only irritate, in a broader perspective, this practice may undermine trust in media and promote polarisation.

The screenshot shows a Facebook post claiming to provide a link to view student exit exam results. The post is clickbait, designed to deceive users into clicking with misleading content and exaggerated claims. The link does not lead to exit exam results but instead redirects to a Telegram channel containing no relevant information. (See fact-checking article by PesaCheck for more information.)

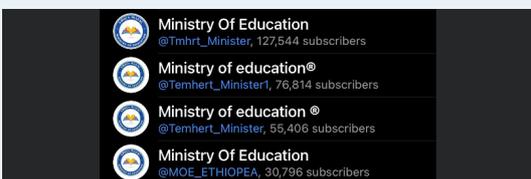
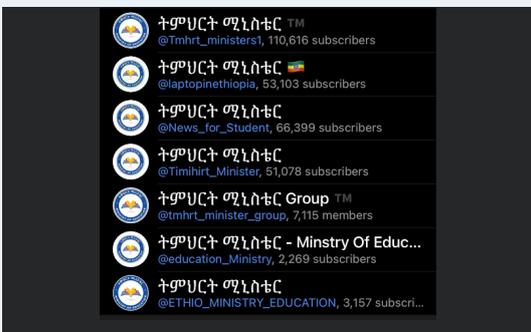


Misleading Content

It is a misleading use of information to frame an issue or an individual in a particular way. It's about selectively cropping photos or choosing quotes or statistics to support an argument.

The screenshots display a news report by Walta Media and Communication Corporate. The women in the pictures are Addis Ababa Mayor Adanech Abiebie, President Sahlework Zewdie, and Minister of Women and Social Affairs Ergogie Tesfaye (from left to right), among others. The headline of the news by Walta reads, "The women's rehabilitation and excellence center built by the city administration is about to start working."

However, the captions in the pictures tell a different story. The first screenshot (the picture on the left) shows a person sharing a post that says, "What's Walta saying?" since the caption reads "Women sex workers." While the second picture, posted by Walta Media itself, reads, "A center designed to transform the lives of women sex workers is about to begin operations." The first post is misleading because the quote has been manipulated to convey a different meaning.



Imposter Content

It is an impersonation of a genuine source. This disinformation exploits your trust in a specific organisation, person, brand, or other entity.



False Context

False context occurs when genuine content is shared with misleading or inaccurate contextual information. An example here would be a picture reshared to fit a new narrative. It is a powerful form of information disorder, as the content used is genuine, and therefore cannot be denied; however, it is reframed in a dangerous way to support a certain point.

The first post (the screenshot on above was shared in 2023 with the caption, “This (referring to the weapons) was found on the premises of a church in Shashemene.” However, the image was presented out of context. The second post (the screenshot on the right) clarifies that the picture is actually from 2021 and depicts weapons found in an individual’s home in the Sidama Region, as reported by the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation at that time.



Manipulated Content

When genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive, it typically involves altering photos and videos to make them appear authentic. Still, the genuine content’s overall meaning differs from the intended.

The first picture (on the left) shows a ship claimed to be owned by Ethiopia. However, the flags were photoshopped and added to the original photo (on the right), which did not have any flags.



An AI-generated image shows Donald Trump running away from police officers and then being arrested. However these photos are fabricated by artificial intelligence and depict incidents that never happened in real life.

Fabricated Content

This type of content is 100% false and new content, designed to deceive and do harm.

When the content is entirely false, the only limit is the imagination of the creators of such content. Distinguishing between factual and fabricated content is extremely difficult for the naked eye. If you have seen any “deep fakes”, which can often be categorised as “fabricated content”, you know how deeply it impacts our trust in the messages we see.

4.3 Fact-checking and Countering mechanisms

Fact-checking utilises expert inputs and authentic external data to verify information and assess its accuracy and reliability.

Fact-checking and debunking false information helps the public make informed decisions. Fact-checkable claims are information that can be verified with evidence and proof. Non-fact-checkable claims are information that includes opinions, promises, and predictions.

Fact-checking Steps

- Identify the claim: Using 'WH' questions (who, what, when, where, why, how, etc.)
- Define terms and concepts.
- Find data: identify evidence and proof.
- Approach experts: to help you explain.
- Authenticate data: latest & reliable data.
- Verify claim: find other sources.

Here's an example of how individuals can fact-check information related to conflicts: Imagine you see a social media post claiming that a particular ethnic group is responsible for recent violent clashes in a region. Here's how you can fact-check it:

- **Check the Source:** Is it a reputable news organisation, a credible eyewitness account, or an official statement from a trusted organisation?
- **Verify with Multiple Sources:** Cross-check the information with reports from other reliable news outlets, international organisations, or independent observers. Consistency among multiple sources increases credibility.
- **Look for Context and Background:** Read beyond the headline to understand the conflict's historical context and underlying causes.
- **Examine Visual Evidence:** If images or videos accompany the claims, use reverse image search tools to verify their authenticity. Misleading visuals or old footage can distort the narrative.
- **Seek Expert Analysis:** Consult experts familiar with the region or any relevant authorities, such as the police. Their insights can provide nuanced perspectives.

- **Consider Bias and Agenda:** Evaluate the potential biases of the source or author to ensure accuracy and credibility. Are they presenting information objectively, or is a particular agenda or bias influencing the narrative?
- **Check for Updates:** Conflict situations evolve rapidly. Look for updates or follow-up reports to see if new information has emerged that could change the initial understanding of events.

By applying these steps, individuals can critically assess conflict-related information, avoid spreading misinformation or inflammatory content, and contribute to a more informed public discourse on sensitive and complex issues.

4.4 Spotting disinformation checklist

- Check the source
- Check the whole content
- Check the author
- Check the image
- Check other reports on the topic
- Check your bias

Pre-bunking: It explores how people can be prevented from falling for disinformation in the first place. It is to inoculate the public against anticipated narratives in advance.

Researchers say fact-checking is like treating the symptoms of an illness and comparing pre-bunking to vaccination!

Fact-checking tools

There are numerous open-source investigative tools available to help you verify the accuracy of content. Here are some of the basic fact-checking and investigation tools.

Image verification tools

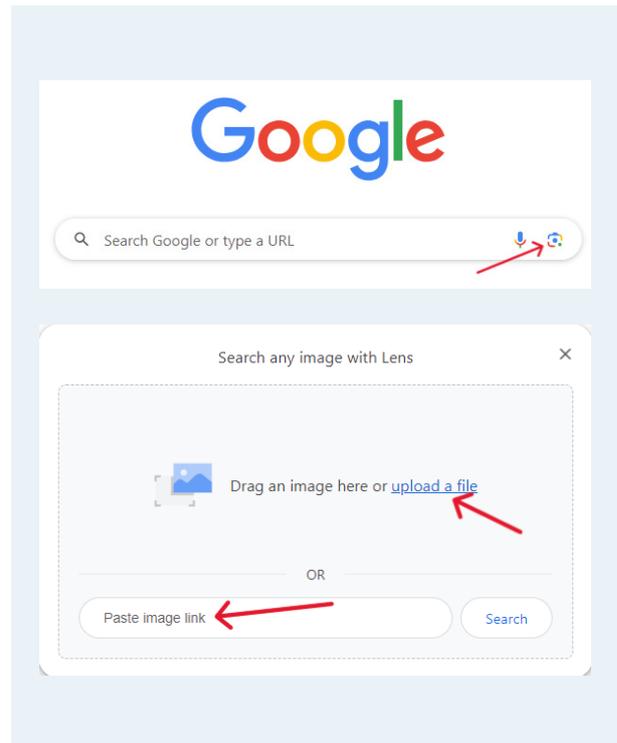
- Google Lens reverse image search
- TinEye
- Bing
- Yandex
- Invid

Geolocation tools

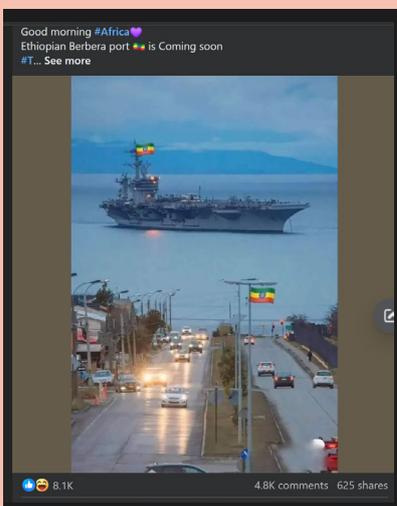
- Google Maps (Street View)
- Google Earth
- World imagery Wayback

AI detection tools

- www.fakeimagedetector.com
- www.deepware.ai



Case Study 3:



Post link

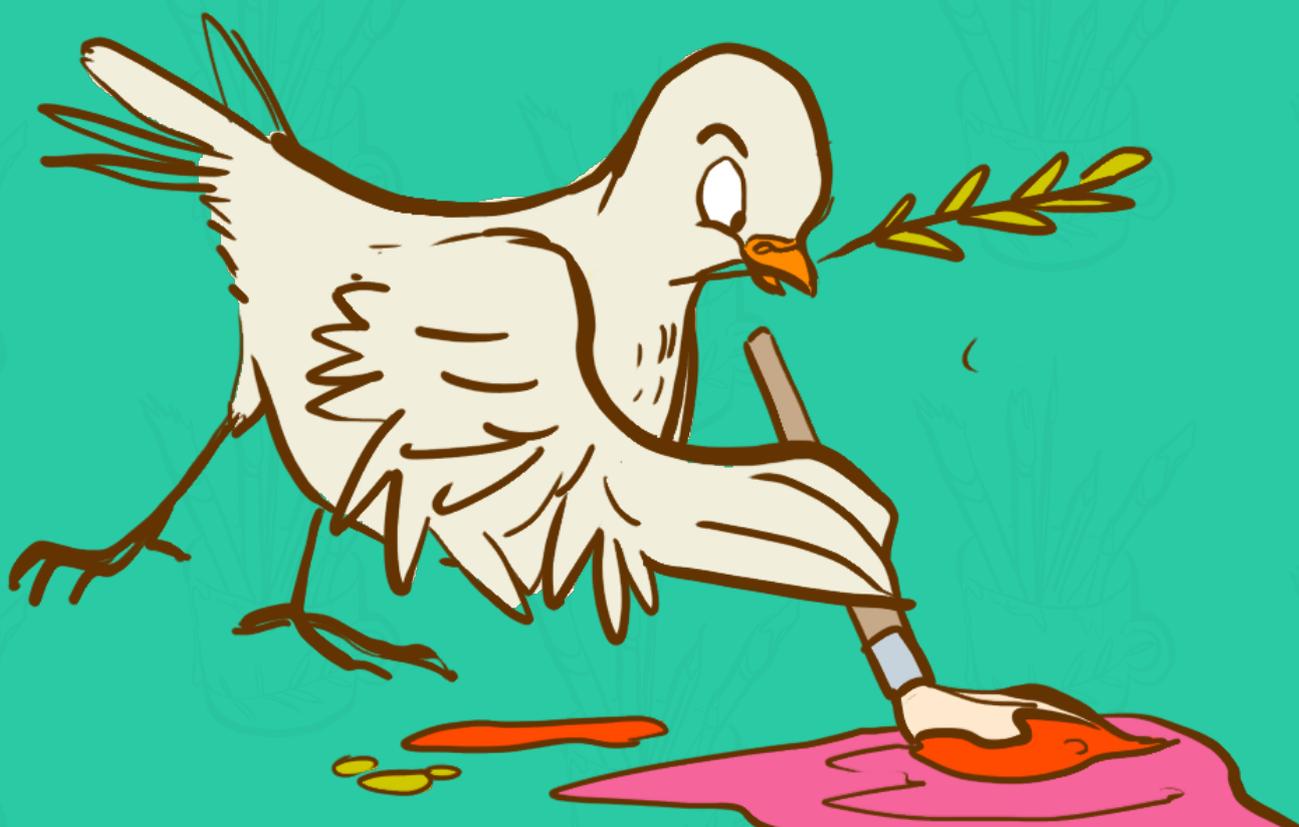
Context: A post shared on Facebook claims that the image shows the “Ethiopian Berbera port.”

Task:

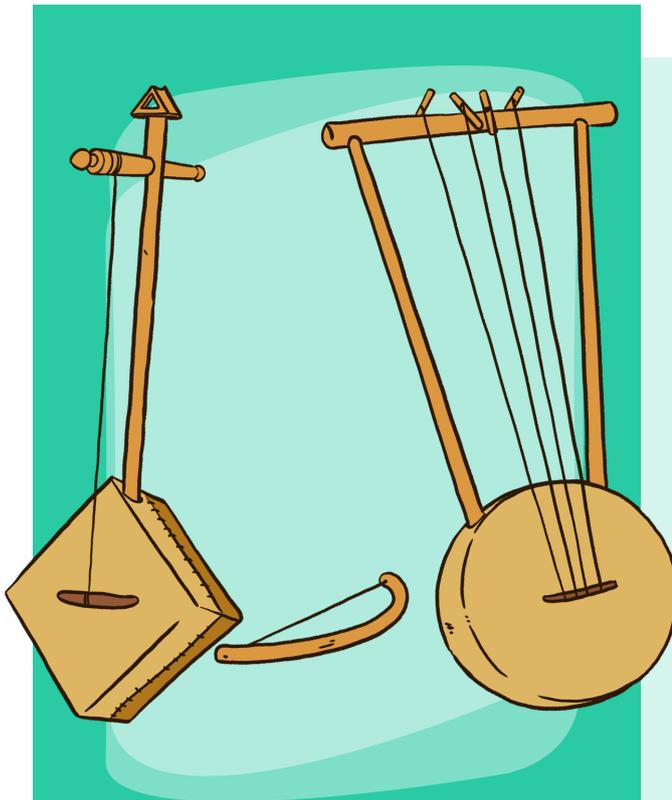
- Investigate this claim using the fact-checking steps
- Analyse the content, and use reliable sources to verify the information
- Write a detailed report (Fact-checking) for social media, debunking the claim

03

Art for Peace building



Artivism in the Ethiopian Context



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- 74 CTA: Let's take action

Chapter Objective

This chapter explores the potential contribution of art to peacebuilding, with a focus on the Ethiopian context. We will delve deeper into questions such as: How can we leverage art, or #Artivism, to promote unity, social change, and post-conflict healing? We'll explore how Ethiopian artists and everyday people use their creativity to spark crucial conversations that pave the way for a lasting and just peace.



1. INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

Ethiopia's rich artistic heritage dates back millennia and is deeply connected to the nation's social development through diverse cultural and historical expressions.

These expressions were not merely entertainment. They guaranteed the legitimacy of rulers, recording their victories, framing them as chosen by God, and criticising the conditions and God himself. Additionally, these artistic expressions helped create and further a sense of national identity among Ethiopia's diverse regions.

The country's rich cultural diversity encompasses over 80 ethnic groups, each with unique traditions, languages, and artistic expressions. While this diversity is a strength, historical and contemporary challenges, including ethnic tensions, resource-based conflicts, and political disputes, have sometimes led to social fragmentation.



In Ethiopia, the art scene has always been dynamic, from music that inspired revolutionaries to art forms that foster peace and unity. Art has long played a vital role in Ethiopian society as a medium for storytelling, cultural preservation, and social commentary. Traditional and modern artistic forms, ranging from oral poetry and music to theatre, murals, and digital media, can be powerful tools for dialogue, reconciliation, and peacebuilding.

This chapter of the field guide aims to provide approaches to leverage Ethiopia's artistic heritage to mitigate conflicts and foster social harmony. This #Artivism guideline promotes unity, social change, and post-conflict healing.

Don't let the art speak over you – Understanding #Artivism Talk.

- **Art:** the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination across various media, including visual arts, performing arts, and literature, resulting in works that hold aesthetic value, evoke emotions, or tell stories.
- **Activism** is taking action and vigorously campaigning to achieve social or political change.
- **#Artivism:** using art as a tool or platform for social or political activism.
- **Protest art:** art created to express dissatisfaction with a particular social or political issue.
- **Rehabilitation art:** the use of art forms to help individuals and communities heal from physical, emotional, and psychological trauma.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Beyond the definitions provided, how can you personally define Artivism?
 - *Artivism can be defined as the use of creative expressions, such as music, painting, poetry, or dance, to address and challenge social injustices or inspire change.*
- Have you encountered any examples of Artivism in your own life? If so, what impact did it have on you?
 - *Ethiopian protest songs during the Derg era or contemporary graffiti in Addis Ababa advocated unity.*
 - *Global examples like Banksy's street art or performances by artists like Fela Kuti, whose music addressed political corruption*

- How does Artivism differ from traditional forms of protest or activism?
 - *Traditional activism often employs direct methods, such as protests, petitions, or political campaigns. On the other hand, artivism uses creative mediums to communicate messages in ways that resonate emotionally and visually.*
 - **BONUS:** *Think about a song or a painting. How does its emotional resonance differ from reading a manifesto or attending a demonstration?*

Art has the potential to evoke a multitude of emotions within the human race. Everything, from music to paintings to theatrical performances, can bypass human reasoning with its unique rhythm and make a direct connection with the heart.

Few can resist the uplifting power of art to inspire peace. Many artists have utilised this form of art in Ethiopia to highlight the importance of peace as a bridge in building a united society. The famous Song Selam (ሰላም) by Mohamoud Ahmed resonates with the importance of peace through its timeless lyrics, which speak to everyone across generations. Egigayehu Shibabaw's Eskemeche (እስከ ሙቼ), another prime example, is an ode to a compassionate and united people whose way is to love and be together.

2. ART AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

Ethiopia's artistic heritage is deeply rooted in its rich history. It has been used for political and religious expression, as a means of power, and as a window into a nation's soul. Ethiopia's artistic heritage, going back millennia, is deeply connected with the nation's social development. This creative expression was not only decoration but a powerful tool for storytelling, religious expression, and the consolidation of power.

2.1 Religion and Art in Ethiopia

The Kingdom of Axum (4th century BC – 8th century AD) laid the foundation. Mysterious stelae and towering obelisks carved with intricate symbols marked royal burials and celebrated victories. These functioned as both art and historical records.

LEARN MORE: A stela is an upright stone slab or column typically bearing a commemorative inscription or relief design, often serving as a gravestone.

Christianity and Islam arrived in Ethiopia in the 4th and 7th centuries AD, marking a significant new chapter in the country's artistic history, colourful manuscripts, embellished with bright illustrations of religious tales, came to life. Historical and religious sites, such as the Aksum Obelisk, the Arch-Hiwa Church of Lalibela, the Harar Jegol Wall, Aba Jiffar Palace, and many others, demonstrate unique combinations of architectural inventiveness and spiritual worship. These structures serve as places of worship and artistic evidence of the faith that shaped Ethiopian society.



Rock-Hiwan Church of Lalibela



Harar Jegol Wall

2.2 Royal Courts and the Flourishing of Art

The rise of consecutive Ethiopian empires further fired artistic expression. Royal courts became lively centres for patronage. Music and literature flourished, stringed instruments like the krar captivated audiences, and poets sang epic histories played by wandering Azmaris. These expressions were not merely entertainment for the upper class. They guaranteed the legitimacy of rulers, recording their victories and framing them as chosen by God, and at times expressing the dissenting voices of communities through satirical art. Additionally, these artistic expressions have been utilised to foster a sense of national identity among all Ethiopians.

2.3 Art and Societal Upheaval

Art also served as a testament to periods of societal upheaval. During tumultuous times, when Ethiopia faced invasions and natural disasters, artistic expression reflected the challenges of the era. Religious paintings took on a darker tone, depicting battles and the courage and faith of the people in the face of adversity. The classic poem titled “Sekokawe Petros” by Laureate Tsegaye Gebremedhin powerfully depicts the painful context Ethiopia had been facing during the struggles against the Italian colonisers.

The 20th century brought in a new era. Ethiopian artists, such as Gebre Kristos Desta, began to experiment with European artistic styles, blending traditional and modern elements. This period gave birth to protest art, whereby creatives use their art to criticise political systems and social injustice.

Ethiopia's artistic legacy is still alive today. People still engage in traditional activities such as weaving and pottery, while contemporary artists continue to explore identities, globalisation, and the country's complicated history.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are some of the biggest challenges facing the preservation of Ethiopian artistic heritage today?
 - *Urbanisation and modernisation often lead to the neglect or destruction of historical sites and artefacts.*
 - *No or limited funding for cultural preservation, making it challenging to maintain Ethiopia's rock-hewn churches, manuscripts, and ancient instruments*
 - *Lack of perceived value for cultural artefacts by locals,*
- Have you encountered any Ethiopian historical art in your daily life? If so, what did you learn from it?
 - *Religious paintings in churches or homes, such as depicting saints or biblical stories*
 - *Traditional crafts, such as woven baskets, pottery, and textiles, are used daily.*
- Imagine you are curating an exhibition showcasing Ethiopian artistic heritage. What art forms would you focus on and why?

3. ART FOR UNITY AND CELEBRATION OF DIVERSITY

A united society flourishes on diverse artistic expressions. Art is a powerful tool for engaging diverse cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds, allowing them to lend their creative voice and express shared humanity and understanding.

This unity through art is especially evident in Ethiopia, where an expressive artistic heritage reflects the country's diverse and multicultural demographics.

In Ethiopia, traditional and modern art coexist across various media. Fabrics with intricate patterns, clothes worn in day-to-day life and special ceremonies, and churches carved out of rocks filled with stories from the Bible stand alongside modern art expressions like street art,

photography, and performance art. These are just a few examples of the artistic diversity that Ethiopia enjoys.

in the Ethiopian socio-political landscape. One line of argument is that ethnic federalism has addressed some pressing needs of different ethnic groups, such as the right to self-administration, cultural and political representation, and decentralisation of power as a way for democratisation. Others argue that ethnic federalism has, among other things, exacerbated identity-based conflicts in the country by overemphasising differences over shared identities.



Don't let the art speak over you – Understanding #Artivism Talk.

- **Shared humanity:** Art speaks a universal language of emotions and stories, fostering empathy and connection across divides
- **Standard ground:** By highlighting shared values and history, art creates a sense of belonging and strengthens societal unity
- **Sparking dialogue:** Influential art ignites conversations about social issues, bridging divides and paving the way for a more unified future
- **Celebrating diversity:** Art serves as a vibrant mosaic, showcasing the beauty of different cultures and promoting inclusivity
- **Community building:** Collaborative art projects foster a sense of shared purpose, breaking down barriers and building stronger communities

These core values serve as a compass to identify artworks that can be powerful tools for peacebuilding and fostering unity.

3.1 Art forms

Murals: Public art sparks conversations and fosters community through shared values and stories

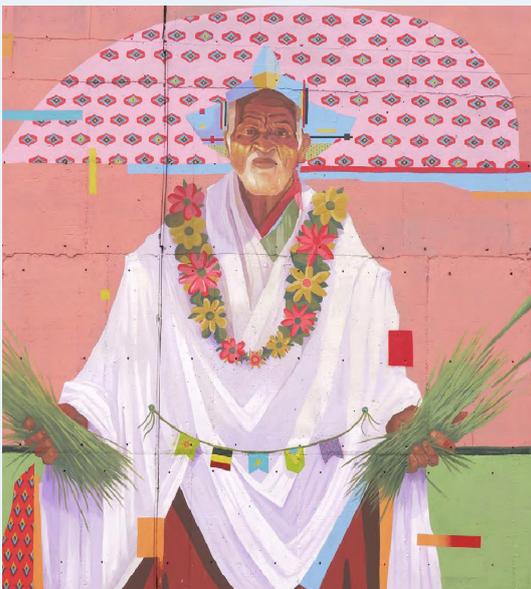


Unity Shines: Mural at Sarbet, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia by Addis Street Art in collaboration with EU Delegation to the African Union.

Photo: Isaac Midekessa



Spread Good:
Mural at Sarbet,
Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia by Addis
Street. Art in
partnership with
Norwegian Church
Aid, Ethiopia



Holding grass is a symbol of peace

Gamo elders became national heroes after stopping a mob attack on an Oromo-owned business. Images and videos went viral, showcasing their symbolic act of peace. Holding freshly cut grass, they knelt before the mob, successfully appealing to the youth and preventing violence.

Gamo Elders: Mural in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia by Addis Street Art in collaboration with the Embassy of Brazil in Ethiopia | Acidumproject.
Photo: Addis Street Art

Who is the artist?

Addis Street Art is renowned for creating massive murals that promote unity, love, and peace throughout Addis Ababa. Every mural reminds the people looking at it that Addis Ababa strives to be a place of social cohesion and a peaceful future.

Textile arts: Traditional fabrics connect people to heritage and build community through collaborative weaving.

Who is the artist?

Shiro Meda Artisans: Vibrant with cultural heritage, Shiro Meda isn't just a marketplace – it's a showcase of Ethiopia's diverse ethnic identities. Local and foreign visitors wander through various garments and accessories, each a testament to the rich traditions of multiple communities. Crafted by artisans with generations of indigenous expertise, the works are exquisite. In addition to preserving their cultures, this process fosters respect and awareness among artisans from diverse cultural backgrounds. Up-close observation of the intricate patterns and symbols that adorn garments produced opens the eye to appreciate their greater significance. This experience allows travellers to delve into the rich heritage of Ethiopia.

Music and dance : Musical traditions and dance performances promote unity and transcend hate and division, fostering a sense of togetherness. Traditional or collaborative dance forms further enrich this connection, showcasing cultural heritage, celebrating diversity, and promoting understanding. This creative expression was not only decoration but a powerful tool for storytelling, religious expression, and the consolidation of power.

Who is the artist?

Melaku Belay, the founding director of Fendika Cultural Centre, isn't just a dancer; he's a global ambassador for Ethiopian music and dance. A master interpreter of the vibrant Eskista style, his phenomenal skill has earned him nicknames like "walking earthquake" and "King of Eskista." Melaku's passion for dance began on the streets of 1980s Ethiopia, where music and dance were an

integral part of everyday life. From religious festivals like Timket to folk ceremonies, he absorbed the diverse regional dances. His dedication continues – Melaku travels across Ethiopia, learning the traditions of all 80 tribal groups, ensuring their cultural heritage lives on through dance.

Folk tales & fables : Passed down through generations, weaves a powerful thread of unity. Shared stories, often featuring common themes of good versus evil or overcoming adversity, transcend ethnic barriers.

Who is the artist?

Aleqa Gebre Hana: 19th-century Ethiopia was home to a witty scholar named Aleqa Gebre Hana, renowned for his Amharic poetry and his teachings on religion. He excelled in the traditional “qene” poetry style and even introduced a new form of ceremonial dance for the Ethiopian Church.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In contrast with the passage above, can you come up with any instances where art has been used to incite hate and provoke conflict?
 - *Political propaganda during the Derg regime in Ethiopia often glorified the state while vilifying dissenters.*
 - *Social media memes and digital art can sometimes spread divisive narratives or misinformation.*
- How can art be used to bridge cultural divides to foster better understanding between communities of varying cultures?
 - *Music and dance collaborations, like Melaku Belay's work, showcase the beauty of Ethiopia's diverse cultural heritage.*

- **ASK:** Take 10 minutes to brainstorm local opportunities for using art as a tool to connect communities and reduce cultural misunderstandings
- What emerging art forms come to your mind when looking to the future to build an inclusive and peaceful society?
 - Digital art and virtual reality experiences can create immersive stories that promote empathy and understanding.
 - Street art and graffiti often resonate with younger generations and can serve as a platform for unity and social justice.
 - Interactive installations or community art spaces can engage people in conversations about inclusion and peace.

4. ART AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Art is not only for beauty, but also a powerful tool of social change.

Artivism, a combination of the words “art” and “activism,” allows artists to use their art for a cause. Whether it is compelling paintings and sculptures or resonant music and performances, artists tell stories for those who cannot speak. Their content also draws attention to critical social issues, inspiring conversation and sparking a fire in us all to act and work for a better world.

However, we should also be mindful that art could be misused for propaganda or instigating divisions and violence among diverse communities.

Powerful Tool for Activism - This is how

Raising awareness: Artists can use their work to inspire new ways of thinking and expose realities outside the limelight, shifting perspective on critical issues in a way that ignites the imagination and evokes emotional response. In recent Ethiopian socio-political movements, several artists have used their artistic skills to mobilise communities for peaceful change. However, in some situations, art has been misused to spread hate speech and cause division among ethnic groups.

Spark action: Art can ignite public conversation and motivate people to make a difference.

Safe space: Activism provides a platform for dissent and critique, mainly where free speech is restricted.

Art works

Stop War: A New Emmy-Winning Film Shines a Spotlight on the Devastating Human Cost of Ethiopia's War. With over 8 million people impacted in just two years, the film exposes the suffering, particularly of children, who are always the first casualties of conflict. It's a powerful reminder of the war's tragic toll and the urgent need for peace.

Mamo the Fool (ማሞ ቁሎ / Mamo kilo) is a YouTube-based Ethiopian animated series that uses satire and humour to tackle real-life social issues. It has become a voice for everyday people grappling with the challenges of life in Ethiopia.

Adding satire to storytelling enables the series to tackle sensitive topics, such as corruption, poverty, and social inequalities, while remaining entertaining and intriguing. The show can be viewed on YouTube, where it has garnered a significant amount of reach and engagement. Viewers can comment, which fuels conversations and disagreements over the issues raised within episodes.

LEARN MORE: satire uses humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticise people's stupidity or vices, particularly in contemporary politics and other topical issues.

Victims of Famine: Before Emperor Haile Selassie I was overthrown, art students expressed their discontent with his regime; one of the works on display is "Victims of Famine" by Eshetu Tiruneh, which emphasises the plight of the population.

Once the socialist Derg assumed control, art became a powerful tool of propaganda. Artists were trained in Soviet Socialist Realism, a style that simplified complex issues to glorify the state. Critical commentary was gone, replaced instead with state-sanctioned messages.



Eshetu Tiruneh, 'Victims of Famine', 1974.
National Museum of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.



Getachew Yosef, 'Revolutionary Motherland or Death', 1979/1980. National Museum of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. Courtesy Kate Cowcher

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What can be done to ensure Artivism's accessibility to a wider audience and increase its impact on social change?
 - ° *ASK: Ask participants to reflect on barriers to accessibility in their communities, such as lack of internet access or funding, and brainstorm solutions*
 - ° *Collaborate with schools and universities to integrate Artivism into education, promote Artivism on widely used platforms like social media, and organise community-based exhibitions, performances, and workshops in local languages.*
- Can social change resulting from Artivism be made sustainable? If yes, what potential strategies can we use to ensure this?
 - ° *Document and archive Artivism projects to inspire future generations, maintain a record of social movements, and pair artistic initiatives with educational campaigns to create lasting awareness*

- Can you think of any ethical perspectives creatives must consider when applying their work for social change?
 - *Respecting the dignity and privacy of individuals or communities depicted in art, avoiding the exploitation of sensitive issues purely for personal gain or recognition, and refraining from sensationalism in portraying social issues, while being mindful of cultural sensitivities and avoiding stereotypes.*
- Is the audience responsible for the effectiveness of Artivism in bringing about social change?
 - **ASK:** *Take 5 minutes to reflect on their own experiences:*
 - *Have you ever been inspired to take action after engaging with a piece of art?*
 - *What can audiences do to support artists and their causes more effectively?*

5. ART FOR POST-CONFLICT HEALING

After conflict, wounds can be both physical and emotional. Art therapy brings a new paradigm that surpasses language, which is helpful for people affected by war or violence to express their trauma and experience in a safe and creative environment.

Survivors can assess their feelings and build a new identity while gaining comfort through art by engaging in activities such as painting, drawing, or crafting.

5.1 Art mends scars - this is how

- **Expressing the unseen:** Art offers a safe space for individuals to express trauma through non-verbal means.
- **Coping mechanisms:** Creating art provides a healthy outlet for stress and anxiety, promoting emotional well-being

- **Building confidence:** The process of creating art fosters a sense of accomplishment and rebuilds self-esteem
- **Healing & reconciliation:** Art projects bring communities together, promoting empathy and understanding
- **Community rebuild:** Collaborative art fosters a sense of shared purpose and hope for the future.

Let's take action

- **Harnessing the power of storytelling:** Ethiopia has a rich storytelling tradition through visual art forms. Helping individuals who have gone through conflict express what they have encountered through drawings, paintings, sculptures, and murals allows them to tap into the experience and have a way to let it out.
- **Music and dance therapy:** Dance and music are integral to Ethiopian culture. Sessions with music therapy can be a safe space to express emotions, while traditional dances can help with physical and emotional therapy.
- **Seek expert advice to avoid causing harm:** using art for the post-conflict trauma healing process might require expert assistance or specialised training since such processes could be highly sensitive and sometimes trigger harm to victims.
- **Mobile art therapy units:** Develop mobile units equipped with art supplies that can travel to remote villages, bringing art therapy services directly to those in need. Ethiopia, like many places, has the potential to benefit significantly from incorporating art therapy into post-conflict rehabilitation efforts.

REMEMBER:

Cultural Sensitivity: Always prioritise cultural sensitivity when designing and implementing art therapy programs. Respect local traditions and beliefs, and ensure art forms resonate with the community.

Sustainability: Focus on building long-term programs with local ownership. Train local artists and equip communities with the tools and resources to continue utilising art therapy for healing and well-being.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Can you recall when you were able to process emotionally challenging experiences through art or other creative outlets?
 - **ASK:** *Take 5 minutes to reflect on the year. Which moments were difficult, and how did you process them?*
- What difficulties and rewards might you face if you take on the role of an art therapist in a post-conflict area?
 - **Challenge:** *Language and cultural barriers may initially make it harder to connect.*
 - **Challenge:** *Limited resources in post-conflict areas could present logistical challenges.*
 - **Challenge:** *Working with individuals who have experienced trauma may be emotionally draining and require patience and resilience*
 - **Reward:** *Helping individuals and communities heal can be an incredibly fulfilling experience.*
 - **Reward:** *Art therapy can foster deep connections and trust with participants.*
 - **Reward:** *Seeing tangible progress in someone's emotional well-being through art is a powerful experience.*
- Would you be open-minded to being part of an art therapy session if you had experienced a traumatic event?
 - **DISCUSS:** *What do the participants imagine the experience to be like?*

Let's take action

DO YOU HAVE A PASSION FOR PEACE AND A CREATIVE SPIRIT?

Let's turn that into action! Here's how to create your #ArtForPeace activity to promote peacebuilding in your community.

Step 1: Define the Core Issue - What is the primary problem you want to address? Who are you going to inspire? What peace theme will you explore? What is the goal of your campaign? Then, select your canvas based on your available resources (such as budget, time, and skills).

Remember: you must assess cultural, religious or political sensitivities and risks associated with the artwork.

Step 2: Be Creative: Online challenges, local arts projects, performance art, or upcycled creations are all encouraged! Planning and organising means setting a timeline, finding locations and materials, enlisting volunteers, and advertising through social media, local media, and flyers.

Step 3: Create a platform for your work: a website, social media site, or an acceptable venue for an in-person art showcase. Get others excited and inspired! Ask them to join in by sharing their art and stories of peace. Plan art talks, workshops, and chats that will spark great conversations. Praise everyone involved and celebrate different voices.

Step 4: Next, make a truly meaningful difference: Capture your adventure with pictures, videos, and personal stories. Share your successes and the impact you've had on your local community. Think about continuous issues, teaming up, or learning to keep things moving.

Step 5: Let's motivate others: Share your #ArtForPeace adventure and demonstrate how creativity can bring peace!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Has there been an instance where you thought of using your creativity to promote peace?
- Considering your community, who would gain the most from peace-building activities? Is there a particular demographic or age group you would target?
- Considering your available time and budget, which art project would be most practical to organise?

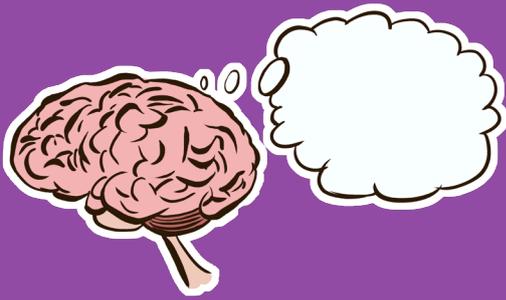


04

Mental health and Trauma healing



Understanding Our Thoughts and Emotions



Content

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85	Types of Trauma
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By the end of this chapter, you will understand that mental health, like physical health, exists on a spectrum and can be impacted by life experiences, including trauma and hate speech. You'll explore how trauma affects thoughts, emotions, behaviour, and the body, and learn to recognise symptoms such as anxiety, emotional numbness, flashbacks, and avoidance.

The chapter highlights different types of trauma, including acute, chronic, vicarious, and complex and their psychological effects, particularly in the context of hate speech. You will also be introduced to tools for mental wellbeing, such as deep breathing, muscle relaxation, grounding techniques, and self-care practices. Additionally, the chapter underscores the importance of healing from trauma not only to restore individual health and resilience but also to foster stronger, more empathetic communities. Through community-based interventions, indigenous practices, and psychoeducation, the chapter encourages both personal reflection and collective action to address trauma and promote social cohesion.

1. INTRODUCTION



Almost everyone has experienced some form of trauma in their life.

Any stressful or upsetting event can lead to trauma, and we have all experienced stressful and disturbing events.

Often, when we hear the word trauma or think about mental health, we think only about those people who are already on the brink of breaking or who no longer function within society. But that is a very narrow understanding of mental health. Much like our physical health fluctuates from season to season, our mental health also evolves over time and with new experiences.

Physical and mental health work

together to create our overall health and well-being.

There is a spectrum of physical health. There is an ideal state of health, where everything functions properly and we experience a pain-free existence. There are minor injuries, like a bloody knee. There are injuries, like a broken leg. And there are severe injuries, like many broken bones or cancer.

Just as with physical health, there is a spectrum of mental health.

There is ideal mental health, where everything feels effortless and we are free of pain. We might not notice minor traumas, except that we feel angry, irritated, or sad.

There are significant traumas that disrupt our sleep, make it hard to concentrate, and make us very sad. And there are substantial traumas that make living very hard. With both mental and physical health, many of us often ignore our bodies.

We still go to work when sick. We feel pain in our body, but push on.

Something is broken, but we don't have the time or money to fix it. However, this often only exacerbates the injury or delays the healing process. We also usually hide the effects of trauma, even from ourselves. We ignore the sense of anger or irritation, or blame others' actions for it. We overlook the lack of energy or sadness. We go about our days, working and doing what needs to be done.

But the question is: How much better would we feel if we were open to discussing our emotions and past traumas? How much more joy and peace could we bring to ourselves and our communities if we took better care of our mental health? How much more peaceful could life be if we addressed the source of our anger and sadness?

This chapter focuses on mental health and trauma, discussing practical ways to achieve improved health and well-being. This material is designed for use by anyone. Read it. Share what you learn. Let us work towards increasing our resilience and bringing more joy and peace into our lives and those in our community.

2. UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a state of successful mental function that results in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and the ability to adapt to change and cope with adversity. It is indispensable to personal well-being, family and interpersonal relationships, and contribution to the community or society.

Mental disorders are health conditions that are characterised by alterations in thinking, mood, or behaviour (or some combination thereof), which are associated with distress and/or impaired functioning and spawn a host of human problems that may include disability, pain, or death.

Mental illness is the term that refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders.

They are not rare: Many people will experience a mental health challenge at some point in their lives. They have various forms: There are different types of mental illnesses, such as depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, and others, each with its own set of symptoms.

They can significantly impact daily life: Mental illnesses can make it challenging to carry out everyday activities, maintain relationships, and participate fully in the community. Experiences like exposure to hate speech and social discrimination can worsen this impact.

Seeking help is crucial: Just like with any other health condition, seeking support from healthcare professionals or trusted community resources is a sign of strength and an essential step towards recovery.

Recovery is possible: With appropriate care, support, and understanding, individuals living with mental illness can experience significant improvement in their well-being and lead fulfilling lives.

Stigma prevents help-seeking: Negative attitudes and beliefs about mental illness can shame people into hiding their struggles and not seeking the help they need. As community leaders and educators, we have a responsibility to challenge this stigma and foster a supportive environment.

Hate speech can have severe psychological effects. It acts as a form of verbal abuse that lowers self-esteem, causes emotional distress, and can lead to trauma. Victims often experience sadness, pain, humiliation, and isolation. Continuous exposure can result in long-term mental health issues like anxiety, depression, and PTSD. As psychologists believe, hate speech can also disrupt

human thinking patterns, altering how people process emotions and respond to others. It influences individuals' cognitive frameworks, potentially shaping harmful beliefs and behaviours. When spread widely, primarily through media, hate speech can escalate into group conflicts, discrimination, and violence, deeply damaging both individuals and communities.

2.1 Thinking Distortions

Often, our thoughts can become distorted, especially during and after difficult experiences like conflict and exposure to hate speech. Recognising these patterns can help us understand our reactions and begin to think in healthier ways. Here are some common thought distortions:

COGNITIVE DISTORTION	DEFINITION	DEFINITION EXAMPLE (HATE SPEECH CONTEXT)	ALTERNATIVE THOUGHT
OVER- GENERALISING	Drawing broad negative conclusions based on a single or limited number of events.	"I saw a news report about one person from that group committing a crime. They are all criminals."	"That was one isolated incident. It's unfair and inaccurate to assume everyone in that group behaves the same way. People are individuals with diverse actions and beliefs."
JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS (MIND READING)	Assuming you know what others are thinking, particularly assuming harmful intentions, without sufficient evidence	"They are looking at me that way because they hate people like me."	"They might be looking at me for a completely different reason. I don't know their thoughts, and it's not helpful to assume the worst."

<p>POLARIZATION (BLACK- AND-WHITE THINKING)</p>	<p>Viewing people and situations in extreme, all-or-nothing terms, with no middle ground</p>	<p>"You're either with us, or you're against us. If you don't completely agree with everything I say about this group, you must support them."</p>	<p>"The world is complex, and people can have different perspectives and degrees of agreement or disagreement. It's possible to understand different viewpoints without fully endorsing them."</p>
<p>LABELING</p>	<p>Assigning rigid, negative labels to individuals or entire groups based on limited information or stereotypes.</p>	<p>"They are all just [derogatory labels]."</p>	<p>"That label is a harmful oversimplification that ignores the individual humanity and diversity within that group. People are more than just a single label."</p>
<p>EMOTIONAL REASONING</p>	<p>Believing that your negative feelings reflect the way things are, regardless of objective evidence.</p>	<p>"I feel disgusted by this group, so they must be disgusting people."</p>	<p>"My feelings are valid, but they are not necessarily facts. It's important to examine the evidence and avoid letting my emotions dictate my understanding of others."</p>

3. UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA

Something is broken, but we don't have the time or money to fix it. However, this often only exacerbates the injury or delays the healing process.

We also usually hide the effects of trauma, even from ourselves. We ignore the sense of anger or irritation, or blame others' actions for it. We overlook the lack of energy or sadness. We go about our days, working and doing what needs to be done.

But the question is: How much better would we feel if we were open to discussing our emotions and past traumas? How much more joy and peace could we bring to ourselves and our communities if we took better care of our mental health? How much more peaceful could life be if we addressed the source of our anger and sadness?

This chapter focuses on mental health and trauma, discussing practical ways to achieve improved health and well-being. This material is designed for use by anyone. Read it. Share what you learn. Let us work towards increasing our resilience and bringing more joy and peace into our lives and those in our community.

3.1 What is Trauma?

According to the American Psychological Association (APA) [1], trauma is — an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape, or natural disaster. However, anyone may experience trauma as a response to any event they find physically or emotionally threatening or harmful. Trauma results from an event, series of events, or a set of circumstances that an individual experiences as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening, which may have lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual

well-being. Trauma is associated with widespread health challenges across demographic groups and can have far-reaching implications for individuals, families, and communities.

Trauma can have long-term effects on a person's well-being. Symptoms may persist and do not decrease in severity.

3.2 Types of Trauma

Understanding different types of trauma can help us recognise and respond to the impact of hate speech more effectively.

Acute Trauma: This results from a single, sudden traumatic event. In the context of hate speech, this could be a direct, intense incident of verbal assault, threat, or online attack. The impact can be immediate and overwhelming.

Example: *Experiencing a sudden, aggressive, hate-filled verbal attack in public.*

Chronic Trauma: This arises from repeated or prolonged exposure to stressful or harmful events. Hate speech could involve ongoing online harassment, persistent discriminatory remarks within a community, or living in an environment where hate speech is normalised and frequent.

Example: *Regularly receiving hateful messages and threats online over an extended period.*

Vicarious Trauma (Secondary Trauma): As mentioned before, this occurs when individuals are exposed to the traumatic experiences of others. In the context of hate speech, this can affect those who listen to victims' stories, witness online hate, or work to address its impact

(like community leaders and educators). It can lead to emotional exhaustion and changes in their worldview.

Example: A community leader who regularly hears distressing accounts of hate speech affecting community members.

Complex Trauma (C-PTSD): This type of trauma results from chronic and varied experiences of interpersonal trauma, often occurring in childhood or within close relationships. While not always directly caused by a single hate speech incident, prolonged exposure to hate and discrimination can contribute to or exacerbate complex trauma symptoms. It can affect emotional regulation, self-perception, and relationships.

Example: An individual who has faced years of discrimination and marginalisation based on their ethnicity, which specific incidents of hate speech can intensify.

3.3 Manifestations of Trauma Related to Hate Speech

Exposure to hate speech, as a form of trauma, can manifest in various ways across different domains of a person's life. Recognising these signs in individuals, communities, and even yourself is essential if you are working to address this issue.

EMOTIONAL MANIFESTATIONS:	COGNITIVE MANIFESTATIONS (THINKING AND MEMORY):
<p>Intense and Fluctuating Emotions: Experiencing strong feelings like fear, anger, sadness, shame, guilt, and helplessness that can shift rapidly.</p>	<p>Intrusive Thoughts and Memories: Unwanted and distressing thoughts or images related to the hate speech experiences that keep replaying in the mind</p>

<p>Anxiety and Worry: Persistent unease, nervousness, and apprehension, often focused on safety or future threats</p>	<p>Nightmares: Disturbing dreams that may replay traumatic events or themes</p>
<p>Emotional Numbing or Detachment: Feeling emotionally distant, unable to connect with others, or a reduced ability to experience emotions. Doing this can be considered a defence mechanism.</p>	<p>Difficulty Concentrating and Focusing: Trouble paying attention, remembering, or making decisions.</p>
<p>Irritability and Agitation: Being easily frustrated, short-tempered, or restless.</p>	<p>Irritability and Agitation: Being easily frustrated, short-tempered, or restless.</p>
<p>Hopelessness and Despair: A negative outlook on the future, feeling like things will never improve.</p>	<p>Negative Self-Beliefs: Developing negative thoughts about oneself, such as feeling worthless, damaged, or to blame.</p>
<p>Difficulty Regulating Emotions: Having intense emotional reactions that seem disproportionate to the situation.</p>	<p>Distorted Thinking: Holding harmful or inaccurate beliefs about oneself, others, or the world due to the trauma.</p>
	<p>Hypervigilance: Feeling constantly on guard, scanning the environment for threats, and being easily startled.</p>

BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS (ACTIONS AND REACTIONS):	PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS:
<p>Avoidance: Staying away from places, people, or situations that trigger memories of hate speech or feelings of insecurity (this can include online spaces).</p>	<p>Fatigue and Low Energy: Feeling constantly tired, even with adequate rest.</p>
<p>Social Withdrawal: Isolating oneself from friends, family, and community activities.</p>	<p>Muscle Tension and Pain: Experiencing aches, stiffness, or unexplained pain in the body.</p>
<p>Changes in Sleep and Eating Patterns: Difficulty sleeping (insomnia, nightmares) or changes in appetite (eating too much or too little).</p>	<p>Headaches and Stomach Issues: Frequent headaches, digestive problems, or other stress-related physical symptoms.</p>

<p>Increased Use of Substances: Turning to alcohol, tobacco, or other substances to cope with difficult emotions.</p>	<p>Increased Heart Rate and Sweating: Physical signs of anxiety or panic.</p>
<p>Outbursts of Anger or Aggression: Difficulty controlling anger, leading to verbal or physical aggression.</p>	<p>Changes in Immune Function: Becoming more susceptible to illness.</p>
<p>Self-Harm: Engaging in behaviours that intentionally cause harm to oneself as a way to cope with intense emotional pain.</p>	
<p>Risky or Impulsive Behaviours: Engaging in activities without considering the potential consequences.</p>	

SELF-REFLECTION EXERCISES: UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA'S IMPACT

Exercise 1: Trauma's Effects

- Have you noticed effects from difficult events or ongoing stress in yourself or others?

Exercise 2: Exploring Trauma Symptoms

- Reflect on experiencing or observing the following after stressful times:
 - Intense/changing emotions, anxiety, detachment, irritability, hopelessness?
 - Recurring upsetting thoughts/memories, bad dreams, focus issues, negative self-views, feeling on edge?
 - Avoiding things, social withdrawal, sleep/eating changes, increased anger?
 - Persistent aches, fatigue, racing heart?

Note: These are for personal reflection. Seek support if needed.

3.4 Why do we need to heal from Trauma?

Reduced Quality of Life: Unresolved trauma can lead to persistent emotional distress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges, making it difficult to experience joy and satisfaction in life.

Impaired Relationships: Trauma can affect our ability to trust, form healthy attachments, and communicate effectively, leading to difficulties in personal and professional relationships.

Physical Health Issues: Chronic stress from unhealed trauma can contribute to various physical health problems, including chronic pain, fatigue, digestive issues, and a weakened immune system.

Disrupted Daily Functioning: Trauma can interfere with concentration, memory, decision-making, and overall productivity in various settings, including work, school, and daily tasks.

Increased Risk of Harmful Coping Mechanisms: Individuals may turn to unhealthy coping strategies like substance abuse, self-harm, or risky behaviours to manage the intense emotions associated with trauma.

Cycle of Trauma: Unhealed trauma can sometimes contribute to repeating harmful patterns in relationships or even unintentionally perpetuating trauma in others.

Hindered Personal Growth: Trauma can create a sense of being stuck in the past, preventing individuals from fully engaging in the present and moving forward in their personal development.

Reduced Resilience: Healing from trauma helps build resilience, making us better equipped to cope with future stressors and challenges in a healthier manner.

Empowerment and Agency: Healing can empower individuals to regain control over their lives and their narratives after experiencing trauma.

Stronger Communities: When individuals heal from their trauma, they can better contribute positively to their communities, fostering empathy, understanding, and healthier social interactions, which is crucial for mitigating hate speech.

MODERATELY COMPREHENSIVE CASE STUDY

Scenario:

The town of Harmonyville is experiencing rising hate speech and discrimination targeting the Zema ethnic group, fueled by online content and leading to real-life harassment.

- **Aisha (Zema):** Targeted online, now anxious, has nightmares, avoids community events, and thinks, "We're never safe."
- **Mr. Getachew (Elder):** Trying to mediate, feels overwhelmed, irritable, and doubts his impact after hearing many distressing stories.
- **Solomon (Majority):** Echoes hateful online rhetoric, labels Zema as "troublemakers," and avoids them, feeling angry and justified.
- **Community Centre:** Attendance is down, especially from the Zema community, and tensions are high.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Impact on Individuals:

- Describe the potential trauma Aisha is experiencing and give one example of an emotional, cognitive, and behavioural manifestation.
- What type of trauma might Mr. Getachew be facing, and what are two signs of it?
- How might hate speech be affecting Solomon's thinking?

Understanding the Problem:

- What is one example of a distorted thought Aisha might be having?
- How is hate speech impacting the Harmonyville community as a whole?

Moving Towards Healing:

- Why is it essential for Aisha to address her experiences?
- Suggest one simple self-regulation technique Mr. Getachew could use.
- What is one initial community action Harmonyville could take to address the division and promote healing?

4. TOOL FOR YOUR MENTAL WELLBEING

Trauma refers to an emotional response to a distressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope, often leaving lasting psychological scars. Adversity encompasses a broader range of challenging life circumstances, including traumatic experiences, poverty, chronic stress, and conflict. Conflict can be defined as a struggle or clash between opposing forces, a battle.

We naturally avoid overwhelming emotions after challenging experiences, such as war, by not talking, avoiding certain places, or isolating ourselves. Doing this may feel safe, but it can lead to long-term problems.

However, gently and safely facing these memories and feelings can lead to healing. You can face them by:

- **Talking it through:** Sharing your story in a supportive environment.
- **Facing fears slowly:** Gradually returning to avoided places or situations.
- **Safe simulations:** Using technology to process trauma in a controlled way.

Traumatic events can lose their power by confronting the problematic emotions related to them, rather than avoiding them, and allowing for processing, learning, and moving forward with greater peace and strength.



4.1 Self-Regulation Exercises

In addition to professional methods, there are techniques available for self-regulation. These techniques help calm the mind and body, enabling individuals to stay within their "window of tolerance"—the optimal emotional zone where distress remains manageable despite ongoing stressors. When emotional activation exceeds this threshold, individuals may involuntarily shift into a "fight or flight" response, or even "freeze" or numb themselves, which reduces their ability to think and act clearly. Learning to self-regulate is critical in reclaiming control and beginning the healing process, even amidst the persistent chaos and uncertainty of conflict.

Self-regulation tools are designed to stabilise emotions and promote a sense of safety.

1. Deep Breathing Exercises

Deep abdominal breathing is one of the simplest and most effective ways to calm the nervous system. It involves breathing deeply into the stomach rather than taking shallow breaths from the chest. Deep breathing increases oxygen flow to the brain, promotes relaxation, and helps regulate emotions.

In conflict settings, where people may feel constantly tense or hyper-alert, practising intentional deep breathing can help reduce stress. Individuals can do this on their own, particularly when experiencing anxiety, panic, or overwhelming emotions.

2. Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

PMR involves tensing and relaxing different muscle groups, allowing the body to release tension stored due to stress. Many individuals in conflict zones, especially those displaced from their homes, unconsciously carry physical tension in their shoulders, jaw, or back.

PMR can be beneficial for reducing anxiety and improving sleep. However, since some people may have injuries or chronic pain, this technique should be practised cautiously and under professional guidance when possible.

- **Get Comfortable:** Lie down or sit in a relaxed position.
- **Focus:** Bring your attention to your body.
- **Tense and Release (Right Hand):** Make a tight fist with your right hand, hold for 5-10 seconds, and release suddenly. Notice the difference.
- **Repeat (Left Hand):** Do the same with your left hand.
- **Continue Upward:** Systematically tense and release muscle groups: Forearms, Upper arms, Forehead, Eyes/ Nose, Jaw, Neck, Shoulders, Chest, Stomach, Buttocks, Right thigh, Right calf/foot, Left thigh, Left calf/foot
- **Full Body Scan:** Once done, scan your entire body for any remaining tension and release it.
- **Relax:** Rest quietly for a few minutes, allowing yourself to enjoy the feeling of relaxation.

3. Grounding Techniques (Safe for Group Practice)

Unlike the previous tools, grounding exercises can be safely practised by individuals or in a group setting. These techniques help individuals focus on the present moment, especially when experiencing flashbacks, anxiety, or emotional distress.

ASK: Participants to stand up and follow the grounding exercise below. Ask them to describe how they feel before and then after the exercise. Note any differences mentioned by the participants.

4. The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

This exercise engages the five senses to help individuals reconnect with their surroundings and reduce feelings of panic or dissociation.

- **5 things you can see** – Look around and name five objects in your environment.
- **4 things you can feel** – Pay attention to physical sensations, like your feet on the ground or the texture of your clothing.
- **3 things you can hear** – Listen for sounds in the background, such as birds, distant voices, or the wind.
- **2 things you can smell** – Identify scents in the air or nearby objects.
- **1 thing you can taste** – If possible, take a sip of water or chew gum to activate your sense of taste.

5. Somatic Grounding

Somatic grounding focuses on body awareness to bring individuals back to the present moment. You can try:

- Feeling the solidity of the ground beneath your feet.
- Stretching or moving your body to release tension.
- Holding a small object, such as a rock or cloth, to feel its texture.

These techniques can benefit individuals in conflict settings who may feel emotionally overwhelmed or disconnected from reality.

4.2 Self Care

Self-care is the practice of individuals taking care of their health using the knowledge and information available to them. It is a decision-making process that empowers individuals to care for their health efficiently and conveniently, collaborating with health and social care professionals as needed.

Self-care involves:

- **Making healthy lifestyle choices** – being physically active and eating healthily
- **Avoiding unhealthy lifestyle habits** – avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption
- Making responsible use of prescription and non-prescription medicines
- **Self-recognition of symptoms** – assessing and addressing symptoms, in partnership with a healthcare professional, where necessary
- **Self-monitoring** – checking for signs of deterioration or improvement
- **Self-management** – managing symptoms of disease, either alone, in partnership with healthcare professionals, or alongside other people with the same health condition

EXERCISE: WITNESS + LEADER**Scenario:**

David, a community leader, feels overwhelmed listening to hate speech victims.

Discussion Questions:

- Trauma type?
- Emotional/cognitive signs?
- Impact on his work?
- Quick self-care?
- Community support for him?

ASK: Are there any other self-care tools that can be useful to people who have experienced trauma?

4.3 Call to Action: Community Interventions

Hate speech profoundly impacts individuals and the wider community, necessitating efforts to address both personal struggles and collective well-being. Community psycho-education, which builds understanding of the psychological, social, and economic consequences of hate speech and available support, can be delivered through broad public awareness initiatives and smaller, trusted group discussions. Community-based interventions are vital strategies that utilise local resources, cultural practices, and social networks to heal the trauma and division caused by hate speech within the community.

Take Action

Educate and raise awareness.

- Organise a community discussion or workshop to break the silence around trauma.
- Share knowledge on how trauma affects mental and physical health, helping individuals recognise their experiences and seek support.
- Research areas where professional support is available and ensure the information is accessible to those who need it.

What else can you do?

- Encourage elders and community leaders to take an active role in guiding healing conversations.
- Integrate indigenous healing methods, such as traditional storytelling, music, and communal gatherings like coffee ceremonies.
- Utilise conflict resolution systems like Gadaa, Jaarso, and Qalluu in Oromia, or other regional practices that foster reconciliation and social cohesion.



05

Gender-Based Violence



Essential concepts of gender-based violence (GBV)



Content

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Chapter Objective

By the end of this chapter, participants will gain the knowledge, tools, and motivation to help foster more equitable, inclusive, and safe online spaces for the marginalised.

The chapter presents a detailed framework for understanding essential concepts related to gender-based violence (GBV) and

gendered misinformation while also examining real-world case studies and developing gender-responsive strategies. The chapter is organised to:

- Enhance comprehension of GBV, including root causes and manifestations, especially in conflict situations.
- Investigate the increasing issue of technology-facilitated gender-based violence and its repercussions.
- Delve into the impact of gendered disinformation and misinformation and their broader effects.
- Analyse the connections between these issues and the influence of religion, culture, and social norms.
- Provide actionable strategies for implementing comprehensive, gender-responsive interventions across various levels.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed gender differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty.

These acts can occur in either public or private settings. As defined by the United Nations (1993), such violence is deeply rooted in power inequalities and is often carried out based on gender roles. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2018), it includes physical, sexual, and psychological harm or suffering, as well as coercion and threats. UN Women (n.d.) further highlights that this violence is often a result of cultural norms and societal expectations. Similarly,

the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2020) states that GBV encompasses various harmful practices, including private and public acts that cause harm.

Most acts of GBV are directed against women because they are female and have unequal power in relationships with men and low status in general in the world. This lack of power and status makes women vulnerable to acts of violence. However, GBV can also be perpetrated against men and boys.

1.2 Ecological model

When discussing GBV, we often employ an ecological model. This model provides a framework for understanding GBV as part of a larger system rather than as isolated individual acts of violence. Violence can occur at and be supported or facilitated by each level of this model. What kind of violence do you think we might see at an individual level? Relationship Level? Community level? Society level?

Relationships with family or friends can be both supportive and harmful to a survivor and can encourage or discourage a perpetrator from committing violence. At the community level, structures and systems can be set up in ways that support women and girls or that discriminate against them, and that are supportive or harmful to survivors. At the societal level, social and cultural norms can either promote and perpetuate violence and the idea that it is normal and acceptable or can discourage violence. At each level, we see unequal power relationships between men and women.

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV):

TFGBV involves using digital technologies for acts of gender-based violence, including cyberstalking, online harassment, and non-consensual image and video sharing.

Gendered Disinformation and Misinformation:

These terms refer to the intentional spread of false information that reinforces harmful stereotypes and incites discrimination against marginalised groups. In Ethiopia, digital media has facilitated the rapid dissemination of such narratives, exacerbating gender inequality (UNECA, 2020; OHCHR, 2021).

2. UNDERSTANDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

2.1 Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Ethiopia

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) remains a significant issue in Ethiopia, particularly in conflict-affected regions

Recent reports highlight the widespread prevalence of GBV, with estimates showing that 40-50% of women and girls in areas like Tigray, Amhara, Afar, and Oromia have experienced violence during the ongoing conflict (Wilson Centre, 2024). The World Bank (2024) emphasises efforts to improve GBV response services across multiple

regions, while the WHO (2023) is working to integrate GBV responses into emergency health services. A 2023 UN Women data hub report reveals that 26.5% of Ethiopian women aged 15-49 reported experiencing intimate partner violence in the previous year. A study in Amhara (Frontiers in Global Women's Health, 2024) also highlights the challenges women face in accessing support in conflict zones, underscoring the need for comprehensive services and accountability in addressing gender-based violence (GBV) in Ethiopia.

Types of GBV

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a complex and multifaceted issue that encompasses a wide range of harmful acts directed at individuals based on their gender identity, gender expression, or perceived gender norms. These acts can take various forms, including:

Physical Violence: Involves the use of physical force that causes harm, such as hitting, slapping, kicking, or other forms of physical assault.

Examples: *Domestic violence, intimate partner violence (IPV), and physical abuse*

Sexual Violence: Any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act without consent. This includes rape, sexual assault, and harassment.

Examples: *Rape, sexual coercion, forced prostitution, and sexual harassment*

Psychological/Emotional Violence: Involves the use of threats, intimidation, or coercion to harm an individual's mental or emotional well-being.

Examples: *Verbal abuse, humiliation, threats, and controlling behaviour*

Economic Violence: Refers to controlling an individual's access to financial resources, making them economically dependent on the perpetrator.

Examples: *Withholding money, preventing someone from working, or controlling their financial decisions.*

Cultural/Structural Violence: Harm caused by societal norms, laws, or practices that perpetuate inequality and discrimination based on gender.

Examples: *Forced marriages, child marriage, and discriminatory inheritance laws*

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): FGM is the partial or total removal of female genitalia for non-medical reasons, causing lifelong physical and psychological harm.

Examples: *Clitoridectomy, excision, and infibulation*

Trafficking: The illegal trade of people, often for sexual exploitation, forced labour, or other forms of abuse

Examples: *Sex trafficking, labour trafficking, and exploitation of minors*

Online Gender-Based Violence: Gender-based violence that takes place on digital platforms, such as social media or online spaces.

Examples: *Cyberbullying, online harassment, revenge porn, and doxxing*

Although gender violence disproportionately affects women and girls, it can impact anyone, including boys and men. The core cause of Gender-Based Violence is the unequal power dynamics. In the Ethiopian context, these different types of GBV are often intertwined and mutually reinforcing, creating a cycle of abuse and oppression. The root causes of GBV include Gender Inequality, Discrimination, and Harmful Social Norms and Practices.

GBV stems from deep-seated gender inequalities, discrimination, and harmful social norms that devalue women, compounded by limited access to education and economic opportunities. Stereotypes and rigid gender roles reinforce male dominance and control over women's lives and bodies, contributing to GBV's prevalence. Additionally, systemic barriers like limited access to education, economic opportunities, and decision-making power further increase women's vulnerability to violence.

Harmful Gender Norms:

Gender stereotypes are often used to justify violence against women. Cultural norms frequently dictate that men are aggressive, controlling, and dominant, while women are docile, subservient, and rely on men as providers.

Traditionally, male and adult social norms that shape authority often include the legitimacy to teach, discipline, and control, as well as the use of violence to maintain that authority.

Wider structural and contextual factors include conflict, income inequality, deprivation, marginalisation, and weak systems.

2.2 Gender Roles and Gendered Stereotypes in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, gender roles confine women primarily to domestic responsibilities, while men engage in broader social and economic activities. Cultural proverbs reflect and reinforce these discriminatory norms, limiting women's societal participation. For example:

Amharic Proverbs

PROVERB	PROVERBS TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH	PROVERBS REFLECTION
ሴት ልጅ ወደ ማጀት ወንድ ልጅ ወደ ችሎት	Women Belong in the Kitchen, Men in Public Spaces	Reflects traditional gender roles that assign domestic responsibilities to women while positioning men as active participants in public life
ሴት ብታውቅ በወንድ ያልቅ	Even if women are knowledgeable, it is still seen as a man's responsibility to take the lead	Reflects societal attitudes that prioritise male authority and leadership, regardless of women's capabilities or expertise
ሴትን ያመነ ጉም የዘገነ	Trusting women is akin to trying to hold onto a cloud in the sky	Reflects a belief that women are unreliable or difficult to trust
ሴትና አህያ በዱላ	Women and donkeys are both guided by a stick	Reflects a traditional view that suggests women require control or authority to be directed, similar to how donkeys are managed
ሴታሴት	Womanish	Reflects weakness or a lack of masculinity
የሴት ልጅ	Children of a single mother	Women and donkeys are both guided by a stick
ሴት ሲበዛ ጎምን ጠነዛ	Too many women spoil the pot	Reflects the character of a child like a troublemaker, wired, useless, or a bad character
ሴትና አህያ በዱላ	Women and donkeys are both guided by a stick	It reflects that when too many women gather, they tend to chat excessively and may not focus on cooking effectively

Tigrinya Proverbs

PROVERB	PROVERBS TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH	PROVERBS REFLECTION
<p>ሰበይቲ እንተዘይፈለጠትውን ፈላግ ትወልድ</p>	<p>A woman may give birth to a wise man, but is never wise herself</p>	<p>A woman can give birth to a wise man, but is not necessarily considered wise. It reflects an outdated perspective that often values the wisdom of men over women, implying that wisdom is not seen as a quality inherent in women, even though they can raise or give birth to individuals who possess wisdom</p>
<p>ሰበይትካን ዳዊትካን ኣብ ኩርኩዕትኻ</p>	<p>A woman and “Dawit” should be kept under the armpit</p>	<p>The phrase suggests a restrictive view where both women and the Bible (Dawit) should be kept indoors, implying that women should stay at home, and religious teachings should remain private, not shared publicly</p>
<p>ሰበይቲን ኣይሰብን ኣድጊን ኣይገንዘብን</p>	<p>A woman is not a human, as a donkey is not property</p>	<p>It implies that, like a donkey, a woman is not viewed as fully human or equal to men. This proverb reflects a profoundly patriarchal and dehumanising perspective, where women are seen as inferior or subjugated</p>
<p>ለገም ሰበይትን ወርቁ ፀድፍን የለን</p>	<p>It is impossible to find gold on a cliff, as it is impossible to find a knowledgeable woman</p>	<p>It reflects a harmful and outdated stereotype that undermines the intelligence and capabilities of women. Comparing a knowledgeable woman to something as rare as gold on a cliff suggests that women are inherently incapable of being knowledgeable or wise, which is false.</p>

<p>ጎል ምውላድ ጉድ ምውላድ</p>	<p>Giving birth to a daughter is a curse to oneself</p>	<p>It shows a harmful belief that having a daughter is a burden or misfortune, similar to a curse. It stems from outdated, patriarchal views that devalue women and girls</p>
<p>ጎል ዝወለድን ጨው ዝነገድን ሓደ</p>	<p>It's all the same to have a female child and to trade salt</p>	<p>Expresses a profoundly pessimistic and outdated view, equating the value of a female child to something as insignificant as trading salt. This comparison suggests that a female child is considered a burden or of little worth, which is both unfair and discriminatory</p>
<p>ሰበይትን ኒሁግን እናወቀጥካ</p>	<p>woman and a Niger seed shall be hit</p>	<p>A harmful and oppressive idea suggests that a woman, like the delicate Niger seed, should be subjected to force or control, which reflects a patriarchal mindset that views women as objects to be subdued or "managed"</p>
<p>ሰበይቲ ዝሃብካያ ትጥሕን በቕሊ ዝሃብካያ ትቁሑም</p>	<p>A woman does whatever task is given, just as a mule eats whatever is provided</p>	<p>A negative comparison between a woman and a mule implies that a woman unquestioningly accepts and performs tasks without question, much like a mule eats whatever is given. Such phrases show a dehumanising view that reduces women to mere workers or tools without recognising their autonomy, agency, or the ability to make choices</p>

Oromifa Proverbs

PROVERB	PROVERBS TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH	PROVERBS REFLECTION
Dubartiif re'een waa balleessuuf jarjarti	Women and goats are quick to spoil things, or women and goats are prone to causing mischief	Reflects a traditional gender perspective that attributes fault and a tendency for wrongdoing against women
Shan taatus shantam taatus dubartiin mana hin ijaartu	Whether there are five or fifty, women cannot build a house	It reflects a conventional gender perspective that denies women the capacity to achieve goals, even collectively, or reflects a traditional perspective that women cannot achieve great things, regardless of how many work together
Dubartiin beektuu hinqabdu beekaa deessi malee	Women cannot possess intelligence, but they give birth to intelligent men. Women are not intelligent themselves; they only give birth to smart men	Reflects a traditional gender perspective that asserts women lack inherent intelligence and can only contribute to intellect through their male offspring
Dubartiifi ijoollee uleen tolchan	Women and children are made good with a stick [beating], or Women and children are corrected with a stick	Reflects a traditional gender perspective that condones physical discipline and violence as a means of controlling women
Uleefi dubartiin jilbaa gaditti	A stick and a woman are best handled below the knee, or a stick and a woman are best controlled from below the knee	Reflects a traditional gender perspective that advocates for the subjugation and control of women
Nadheeniifi faradeen galgala baddi	Women and horses are ruined by old age, or women and horses decline in value with age	Reflects a traditional gender perspective that portrays women as losing their worth as they age
Taa'uurra dubra dhalchuu wayya	Giving birth to a daughter is better than doing nothing	Reflects a traditional gender perspective that suggests having a daughter is only marginally better than being unproductive, and that sons would be much better

ASK: Do the participants have other examples of how gender roles are defined through sayings or proverbs in Ethiopia?

In Ethiopia, gender-based violence manifests in diverse forms, varying by region, ethnic group, and language. Below are some examples of the prevalent gender-based violence in the country.

2.3 Real Cases of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Ethiopia

Case 1:

In western Ethiopia, among the Gumuz ethnic group, when a woman is about to give birth, the community prepares food, clothing, and blades for her. She is then sent to the jungle to deliver her baby alone and cut the umbilical cord herself, as this is seen as a demonstration of strength. Upon her return home, a small hut is prepared for her, where she is isolated from family members for a period of purification. During this time, family members maintain their distance and throw food to her, avoiding physical contact.

Case 2:

In Gambella, among the Agnuwak ethnic group, a woman is deemed impure for a year after giving birth. During this period, her husband is prohibited from having sexual relations with her and is permitted to marry another woman and live with his new wife. This culturally endorsed practice promotes polygamy, which can lead to significant psychological, social, and financial harm, as well as contribute to gender-based violence (GBV) against women.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How do religious, cultural, and traditional practices contribute to GBV in your local context?

- **ASK:** Participants take 5 minutes to write two examples of GBV that they have observed in their homes or communities.
- Cultural practices like child marriage, female genital mutilation, or honour killings that violate women's and girls' bodily autonomy and human rights
- Religious interpretations that justify men's control over women or condone domestic violence
- Traditional gender roles and expectations that limit women's independence and decision-making power
- Customary dispute resolution mechanisms that fail to address or prevent GBV adequately

ASK: Take 10 minutes to reflect on the cultural practices described in the real cases of GBV in Ethiopia. How do these practices contribute to the perpetuation of gender-based violence and inequality?

Isolation and lack of Support:

In Case 1, the practice of sending a woman to deliver her baby alone and isolating her during the birth process reinforces the notion that women are burdensome and need to be controlled. This isolation can leave women without the support necessary to challenge abusive norms or seek help.

Institutionalised Inequality:

In Case 3, cultural practices that allow a husband to take another wife while considering his first wife impure institutionalise gender inequality. It marginalises women and creates conditions where their rights and well-being are compromised, paving the way for further violence and abuse.

Cycle of Violence:

These practices often stem from and reinforce broader societal beliefs about male dominance and female subordination, creating a cycle where gender-based violence becomes normalised and challenging to break.

What strategies can communities use to address and transform harmful gender norms and practices that contribute to gender-based violence in Ethiopia?

Education and awareness, community dialogue, support systems for women, policy and legal reforms.

3. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS ON GBV IN ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia's legal framework addresses GBV through constitutional provisions, penal codes, and family laws that aim to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

FDRE Constitution

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Constitution, adopted in 1995, enshrines the rights of individuals, emphasising equality and non-discrimination—article 35 guarantees explicitly women's rights and freedom from violence (FDRE Constitution, 1995). The Constitution (Article 6) duly

recognises the equal citizenship status of men and women, and it, under Article 7, sets out that the masculine gender shall also apply to the feminine gender. The Constitution (Article 25) guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination based on sex. Article 33 addresses citizenship and marriage, ensuring that Ethiopian nationals of either sex can marry foreign nationals without losing their Ethiopian nationality. Article 34 also addresses marriage rights, affirming women's equal rights during marriage, divorce and decision-making during the marriage. Article 34 (3) states that the minimum age for marriage should be 18 years or older.

Criminal Code

Ethiopia's Penal Code criminalises various forms of GBV, including sexual assault, domestic violence, and harmful traditional practices. Article 620 addresses rape, stipulating severe penalties for offenders, while Article 643 criminalises female genital mutilation (Penal Code of Ethiopia, 2005).

Family Law

Ethiopian family law encompasses regulations that protect the rights of women and children in domestic settings. It emphasises the importance of consent in marriage and provides mechanisms for addressing domestic violence (Family Law, 2000).

Policies, Proclamations and Ratifications

Ethiopia has implemented various policies and proclamations to combat gender-based violence (GBV). The National Women's Policy, Gender Mainstreaming Guideline, National Road Map to End Child Marriage, and the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence (2016-2020) aim to strengthen legal frameworks, promote awareness, and provide support services for victims (Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs, 2016).

The new Labour Proclamation No.1156/2019 under Article (14) has prohibited any attempt to commit sexual harassment or sexual violence at the workplace and physically abusing anyone in the workplace. Employees, as

per Proclamation 1156/2019, who have suffered sexual harassment or sexual violence will be entitled to terminate their contracts without notice. They will also be eligible for severance payment and compensation. The law provides a higher amount of compensation payment for employees who are forced to terminate their contract, without notice, for reasons of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

The Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No.1064/2017 Article 1(13, defines sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advance or request or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature and includes:

- Unwelcome kissing, patting, pinching, or making other similar bodily contacts;
- Following the victim or blocking the path of the victim in a manner of sexual nature; and
- Putting sexual favor as a prerequisite for employment, promotion, transfer, redeployment, training, education, benefits or for executing or authorising any human resource management act.

3.1 Responding to Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Ethiopia has implemented various strategies to address gender-based violence (GBV), including the establishment of one-stop centres (OSCS), multisectoral referral networks, gender desks, community initiatives, mobile applications, and specialised police units. The OSCs provide comprehensive services for GBV survivors, including medical care, legal aid, case management, and psychosocial support, all in one location. They aim to enhance collaboration and better protect women from gender-based violence (GBV).

According to the 2018 annual report from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), 11 OSCs have been set up across three regional

states and the federal cities of Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa between 2015/16 and 2017/18. Additionally, 12 rehabilitation centres have been created for victims of GBV and harmful traditional practices. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Article 16) provides that Ethiopia must pursue legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to prevent children from being tortured, treated inhumanely, or abused. Additionally, Proclamation No. 111/2016 establishes measures for the prevention and control of violence against women.

The Ethiopian Constitution, under Article 34(3), states that the minimum age for marriage is 18 years or older. However, in

Despite the constitutional protections and the various policy frameworks in certain regions, particularly in Oromia, Somali, and Afar, it is still common for marriage engagements to occur below the age of 18. These practices, often rooted in traditional and cultural norms, directly contribute to the persistence of harmful practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV). These practices violate the rights of young girls, exposing them to early pregnancies, increased health risks, and a higher likelihood of experiencing violence and discrimination.

NGOs in Ethiopia play a key role in supporting government efforts to establish One-Stop Centres (OSCs) and rehabilitation facilities for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). In 2022, the government, in collaboration with UNICEF, inaugurated an OSC in Dessie, providing integrated services including medical, legal, and psychosocial support. Similarly, in 2020, UNFPA helped launch an OSC at Dilla University Referral Hospital in SNNPR, streamlining services for survivors of sexual violence. In Tigray, UN Women established shelters for GBV survivors, providing safe housing and support. These initiatives highlight the vital collaboration between NGOs and the government in addressing GBV in Ethiopia.

4. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) AND CONFLICT

Gender-based violence (GBV) often escalates during conflicts, significantly impacting vulnerable populations. In Ethiopia, the relationship between conflict and GBV presents critical challenges.

Link between GBV and Conflict

GBV and conflict are deeply intertwined. Conflict amplifies both the frequency and severity of GBV, profoundly affecting women, children, individuals with disabilities, and older people. The most commonly recognised connections include the following:

- **Increased Vulnerability:** Conflicts disrupt social structures, heightening the risk of GBV among women and children due to displacement and loss of support (UN Women, 2021)

- **Weapon of War:** Armed groups frequently use sexual violence as a tactic to exert control and instil fear within communities (UN Women, 2021)
- **Displacement:** Armed conflict leads to mass displacement, particularly affecting women and girls in refugee camps, where safety is compromised (UNHCR, 2020).



4.1 Case Study: Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Conflict Situations in Ethiopia

Context: Conflicts in Ethiopia, particularly in Tigray, Amhara, and Oromia, led to a significant rise in gender-based violence (GBV). Vulnerable populations, especially women and girls, face increased risks of sexual violence, domestic abuse, and trafficking.

Case Summary: Sexual Violence: Trhas, a 25-year-old displaced woman, was assaulted by armed men in a refugee camp. Sexual violence has become a weapon of war in these regions.

Domestic Violence: Fatima, a mother of three, suffers from increased domestic abuse as her husband struggles with economic and emotional stress due to the conflict.

Access to Services: Survivors face barriers in accessing medical and psychological support due to damaged facilities and societal stigma.

This case highlights the urgent need for coordinated responses to GBV in Ethiopia's conflict zones, emphasising awareness and effective interventions to protect women and girls.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How do conflict and instability in Ethiopia increase the risk of gender-based violence?

- Displacement, breakdown of social structures, weaponisation of sexual violence

What barriers do survivors of GBV face in accessing support services during conflict, and how do these barriers affect their recovery

- Damaged medical facilities, societal stigma, and lack of psychological support
- **BONUS:** Divide participants into small groups and ask them to create a visual “barrier map” on paper. Each group should list the obstacles faced by survivors and discuss ways to overcome them. The groups should then share their maps.

How can policy and legal frameworks be improved to better protect women and vulnerable populations from GBV during conflicts?

- Encourage participants to think out of the box.

What practical steps can communities, NGOs, and government agencies take to support GBV survivors in conflict situations?

- Consider both immediate interventions (e.g., emergency support services, legal protection, housing and relocation) and long-term strategies (e.g., economic empowerment programs)

ASK: Take 5-10 minutes to brainstorm what interventions can be used to support survivors, consider initiatives that you already know or some that are new.

5. TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (TFGBV)

5.1 Definition and Types

Tech-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) refers to the use of digital technologies to perpetrate acts of gender-based violence. It can take a variety of forms, including:

- **Cyber stalking:** Repeated online surveillance, monitoring, and harassment of an individual.
- **Non-consensual image sharing:** The distribution of intimate or private images and videos without the subject's consent.
- **Online harassment:** Threats, abusive language, and other forms of targeted abuse on digital platforms.
- **Deep fakes:** The creation and dissemination of synthetic media (such as manipulated images or videos) to harass, shame, or exploit individuals.

- **Doxing:** The malicious publication of an individual's personal or identifying information online.

5.2 Digital Technologies Exacerbated GBV

The rapid growth of digital technologies has opened new avenues for gender-based violence (GBV), allowing abusers to target victims easily through anonymous online platforms. The permanence of digital content can prolong survivors' trauma, while technology-facilitated GBV (TFGBV) complicates evidence collection and law enforcement responses. The cross-border nature of online harms further challenges accountability and support for survivors.

In Ethiopia's ongoing conflict, tech-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) significantly impacts women and marginalised groups. Activists and journalists face online harassment, non-consensual image sharing, and deep fakes aimed at discrediting them, as seen in

the case of a female journalist targeted with a deep fake video (Amnesty International, 2021). These tactics increase vulnerabilities and suppress dissent, with many women receiving online threats that lead to real-world violence (Human Rights Watch, 2022). Doxxing and physical attacks against women have also been documented (UN Women, 2020). Addressing these issues is vital for creating safer digital spaces and promoting gender equality in Ethiopia.

5.3 Gendered Disinformation

Gendered disinformation and misinformation refer to the intentional spread of false or misleading information that reinforces harmful gender stereotypes, norms, and biases. These narratives can take many forms, from distorted claims about women's capabilities and roles in society to the perpetuation of damaging gender-based stereotypes.

Importantly, gendered disinformation is not limited to content that explicitly targets women. It can also manifest in more subtle ways, such as the omission or marginalisation of these groups in media narratives, or the perpetuation of traditional gender roles and power dynamics.

EXERCISE: GENDERED DISINFORMATION IN THE ETHIOPIAN CONTEXT

To better understand the dynamics of gendered disinformation in the Ethiopian context, identify and analyse specific examples rooted in religious, cultural, and social norms.

Consider the following:

- What dominant narratives or myths are perpetuated, and how do they relate to gender roles, expectations, and power dynamics?

- Myths that portray women solely as caregivers and homemakers, suggesting that their roles are limited to domestic tasks
 - Claims that women's behaviour should strictly adhere to traditional moral values are often used to justify restrictions on their freedom and participation in public life.
 - Narratives that diminish the contributions or rights of ethnic or religious minorities, especially women, by portraying them as outsiders or threats to social cohesion (marginalisation of minority groups)
- **How are these gendered disinformation campaigns being disseminated, and what digital and offline channels are being used?**
- **ASK:** Using the provided examples, explain why you might consider the posts targeting women or those that could be regarded as GBV. What is your view of those posts after this discussion?
- **What are the potential impacts of these narratives on women, minorities, and other marginalised groups in your community?**
- Harmful stereotypes may lead to increased marginalisation, harassment, and even violence against those who deviate from traditional roles.
 - When disinformation justifies GBV or discourages reporting, it can lead to a culture where violence is seen as acceptable or inevitable.
- **Discuss the Potential Impact and Strategies for Countering Gendered Dis/Misinformation**
- Potential impact: Increasing social division, undermining gender equality, inciting violence and harassment
 - Strategies: Media literacy education, promoting accurate narratives, digital and social media campaigns, policy change, community dialogue and workshops.

5.4 Intersections of GBV, TFGBV, and Gendered Dis/Misinformation

Gender-based violence (GBV), tech-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), and gendered disinformation/misinformation are complex, interconnected issues that cannot be addressed in isolation. These phenomena are intrinsically linked, with each one often exacerbating and reinforcing the others.

For example, gender-based violence can be both a cause and a consequence of gendered disinformation. Harmful narratives that objectify or devalue women, minorities and marginalised groups can create a social climate that enables and even justifies GBV. Conversely, experiences of GBV can be used to fuel the spread of gendered disinformation, as survivors are frequently subjected to victim-blaming and stigmatisation.

Similarly, the use of digital technologies to perpetuate tech-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) is often enabled and amplified by the rapid dissemination of gendered disinformation online. Malicious actors can leverage these false or misleading narratives to target and silence marginalised groups, further entrenching their vulnerability to violence and abuse.

5.5 Hypothetical Case: Intersections of GBV, TFGBV, and Gendered Dis/Misinformation in Ethiopia

Case Summary:

In Ethiopia, Hana, a women's rights activist, becomes the target of a misinformation campaign during a political crisis. False claims are circulating online, depicting her as corrupt and disloyal, which leads to intensified harassment and threats against her. This disinformation not only heightens the risk of technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) but also undermines her credibility and advocacy efforts, causing significant emotional distress.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discuss the risks Hana faces after being targeted by false narratives.
- What actions can be taken by organisations to counter gendered misinformation?

5.6 Strategies for Holistic, Gender-Responsive Interventions

Addressing gender-based violence (GBV) in Ethiopia necessitates a multifaceted approach that combines prevention of GBV with effective response mechanisms. Tailoring these strategies to the specific context of all settings enhances their effectiveness.

6. PREVENTION OF GBV

Awareness and education are the strategic use of information, communication, and learning activities to change harmful attitudes, beliefs, norms, and behaviours that contribute to gender-based violence.

Community mobilisation involves engaging, organising, and empowering community members and local leaders to take collective action in preventing and responding to gender-based violence.

Legal & Policy Reform includes updating, enacting, or strengthening laws, regulations, and policies to prevent and respond to GBV more effectively.

Economic Empowerment increases individuals' financial independence and decision-making power, particularly for women and marginalised groups, thereby reducing their vulnerability to GBV.

6.1 Response mechanisms to GBV

One-Stop Centres (OSCs): These are integrated service delivery points where survivors of gender-based violence can access multiple essential services under one roof—typically health, psychosocial, legal, and safety services.

Healthcare Services refer to the immediate, short-term, and long-term medical and psychosocial support provided by trained health professionals to address the physical, emotional, and reproductive health consequences of GBV.

Legal Support encompasses a range of services and assistance provided to survivors, helping them understand, navigate, and access justice systems—whether formal (e.g., courts, police) or informal (e.g., customary or community mechanisms)—to seek protection, hold perpetrators accountable, and claim their rights.

Shelter & Social Support: This is the protection, practical assistance, and emotional support provided to survivors of gender-based violence to help them escape immediate danger, stabilise their lives, and begin the process of recovery and reintegration.

Case Management Approaches: In this approach, trained professionals, such as social workers or caseworkers, assess the needs of GBV survivors, develop an individualised care plan, and coordinate access to a range of services, including health, psychosocial support, safety planning, legal aid, and shelter.

Both prevention and response strategies are essential for a holistic approach to GBV, aiming for long-term change and immediate survivor support.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE:

Formulate a Comprehensive Action Plan for Addressing GBV, TFGBV, and Gendered Dis/Misinformation in Ethiopia

Participants will develop a multi-faceted action plan to tackle Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Trafficking for Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV), and gendered disinformation in Ethiopia, considering the local context and the interrelated nature of these issues. Key components to address include:

- **Policy and Legal Reforms:** Identify critical areas for legislative change and devise advocacy strategies for implementation.
- **Community-Based Interventions:** Develop awareness campaigns, educational initiatives, and dialogues that engage diverse stakeholders, including religious and cultural leaders.
- **Digital Empowerment:** Implement digital literacy and online safety training to help marginalised groups navigate the digital space effectively.
- **Survivor-Centric Support:** Develop comprehensive, gender-responsive support services and initiatives led by survivors.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish mechanisms for data collection and ongoing assessment of the interventions' impact and effectiveness.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: Encourage participants to critically consider how Ethiopia's unique religious, cultural, and social norms influence the design and execution of these interventions. Discussions should focus on strategies to navigate potential conflicts, foster constructive partnerships, and ensure culturally sensitive solutions that meet the needs of diverse communities.

Call to Action

As participants in this field guide, you are now equipped with the knowledge and tools to take actionable steps toward addressing gender-based violence, tech-facilitated gender-based violence, conflict-related gender-based violence, and gendered disinformation in your communities. We encourage you to apply the strategies outlined here, adapting them to the specific contexts and needs of the populations you serve. It may involve advocating for policy reforms, implementing community interventions, empowering marginalised groups through digital literacy, or supporting survivor-centric services.

We urge you to become agents of change, using your expertise to drive systemic transformation. Collaborate with diverse stakeholders, challenge harmful social norms, and amplify the voices of those most affected by these issues. Your influence can help reshape perceptions and foster a more supportive environment.

Together, we can envision a future where gender-based violence and misinformation are relics of a past injustice. Let us commit to advancing gender equality, human rights, and creating inclusive, equitable, and violence-free online and offline communities.



Facilitator Notes

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1. ORGANISING A TRAINING

Successfully delivering workshops relies on adequate preparation and a commitment to supporting people's learning and development.

This guide includes techniques, tips, and activities to help you.

2. PLANNING YOUR SESSION

Selecting a Focus

As a trainer/facilitator, think through the following questions:

- Decide what the **primary focus** of the training will be.
 - *What is the one thing you want participants to learn? Your focus should be specific. You have clarified your goal when you can clearly and simply state the purpose of the training in one sentence. Write this one sentence down, so you can refer to it when planning your training to stay on target.*
- Once you have the **goal** written out, consider these questions:
 - *What can you do to ensure the training meets the goal?*
 - *Can you guess what problems might arise and try to solve them beforehand?*
 - *What related topics should you prepare to talk about?*
 - *What rules do you need to set up ahead of time to ensure things do not get off schedule?*

Sending Reminders

- Send out an agenda to participants five days before the training that includes all relevant information:
 - *Directions to the place where the training will take place*
 - *Exact time when the training will start and at what time the training will end*
 - *What topic and materials will be covered during the training*
- Tell participants if there are any special requirements for participation, such as a basic understanding of English or a certain level of computer literacy.
- Send another reminder to participants about the training two days before the workshop.

Preparing the Content

For the training to succeed, you must be familiar with the content you will teach. **We can only teach what we know.**

Follow these tips to be ready to teach:

- Review the primary goal of the session, as discussed above. Then, using this focus, create a lesson plan for the training. Be specific about **what** will be covered and **when you will** cover it during the training.
- Be sure you have read through all the materials and understand them well.
- Think through what questions participants might have and think about how you will answer these questions.
- Consider what content participants might find confusing and devise three ways to explain it.
- Determine the participants' knowledge and skill levels so that you can adjust your teaching to their needs and abilities.
- Ensure you are familiar with any video or audio content and how to play it.
- Before the training, it helps to practice explaining topics and ideas to friends and family. The more often you work on explaining something, the easier it becomes. So practice on others before the training, and you will feel more ready on the training day and have spread valuable information to your friends and family members.

Materials Needed

- Do you need any resources or materials for the session? Gather them now, such as the Field Guide or other materials you want to use during the training.
- What materials will the participants need? Paper? Pens? Anything printed out?

Logistics of the Session

- When planning the session, keep your stated goal in mind. What would it be if there was only one thing participants could learn and take away with them?
- How much time do you have and need? Exercises always take longer than expected, so build in enough time.
- What kind of space or equipment is available to you?
- How many participants will there be? Make a plan to adapt the training if more people than expected or fewer than expected are there.
- Think about checking if the participants have understood your key points.
- At the end of the training, briefly summarise (in less than 5 minutes) what material you have covered and what the participants have gained in skills.

What kind of teaching style best suits your topic and audience? Use a combination of many different forms of teaching.

Here are some **teaching formats** you can use:

- Lectures** are ideal for introducing a topic. Keep lectures to 30 minutes or less; follow it with something more interactive. When giving a lecture, summarise the essential points at the beginning and the end.
 - Discussions** are helpful after a lecture. Have open-ended questions ready to help prompt a discussion. An open-ended question doesn't have a right yes/no answer but allows for reflection. Examples of open-ended questions:
-

- How could you apply what you learned in your community?
- What aspect of the topic is most challenging to understand?
- How do you think we could change the way people interact online?

Discussions often take longer than expected, so set a time limit ahead of time and tell participants this. It can be as simple as saying, “We will now discuss this topic for 10 minutes and then we have to move on.”

- Demonstrations** work best when you need to show how to do something hands-on. It is usually a good idea to demonstrate the steps in front of the group and then let each learner try to do it themselves. This way, participants will immediately find out if they can replicate what you demonstrated or if there are areas they need help understanding.
- Online learning** is helpful when trainees need to learn about specific skills, when video or audio material helps with learning, or when self-testing activities (such as quizzes) would be helpful to the learning process.
- Roleplay** involves acting out a new skill in a pretend environment and learning from the feedback from other participants.
- Group work** is a good idea if there are many participants. You can break the large group into smaller groups, which allows them to interact more and have an easier time discussing and asking questions. Whenever you use group work, tell the participants how much time they have to complete the tasks and give a three-minute warning when the time is almost up.
- Case studies** can help learners put new information into context. As they process the data and relate it to a relevant situation, they create mental connections that will help them recall the information later.

3. TRAINING BASICS

Understand Your Role as Facilitator

The facilitator plays a vital role in the learning experience. One of the most essential things a facilitator can do is create a safe and supportive environment for participants. Participants need to feel comfortable asking questions (even straightforward ones) and know they can speak up, even if they are unsure their answers are correct.

Setting the Tone

People learn more effectively in a supportive, friendly environment. Everything from attitude to choice of words, facial expressions, and tone of voice can influence the training. For the length of the training, leave whatever is weighing on your mind behind and focus on being positive and supportive.

Engage Participants

Engaging participants throughout the training is essential. People learn more when they are involved with the material. One way to increase engagement is to ask many questions and encourage all participants to contribute.

Manage the Training

As the facilitator, you are the training manager, and it is up to you to keep the training on schedule and under control. You may have to deal with difficult situations, difficult participants, and unexpected circumstances. It is your responsibility to control and manage the problem, whatever it may be.

Manage Time

Participants typically enjoy group discussions and want to share their ideas and experiences. As a result, it is easy for discussions to take up too much time. Knowing when to stop a discussion and move on to the next part of the training is essential. It can be done by simply stating that you need to stay on schedule and that participants can discuss further after the training has ended. Note that it helps to tell participants how much time they have ahead of time for almost all

activities. So before you start a lecture, tell them how long someone will speak. Before group work or role play, tell them how much time they have. The more this is communicated, and the more you keep to your schedule, the more smoothly the training will go.

PLEASE NOTE:

- #defyhatenow trainers and presenters should not share political opinions regarding the current conflict.
- Participants are not supposed to engage in political debate or hurl insults. Your role as a trainer is to stop discussions if they turn towards the political.
- You have the right to stop anyone who diverges from the main topic.

4. FACILITATING THE SESSION

- Attendance sheet
- Transport incentive sheet (if applicable)
- Feedback survey form
- Activity reporting template
- Photos/videos (documentation/photographer, audio recorder)
- Projector (if applicable)
- Flipcharts and pens
- Translators (if applicable)
- Notetaker

Program (One day) [EXAMPLE ONLY]

TIME	PROGRAM
08:30 - 09:00	Introduction to the training and goals (lecture)
9:00 - 10:00	Introduction to propaganda and fake news (lecture and small group discussions)
10:00 - 11:00	Discussion of hate speech mitigation on social media (group work)
11:00 - 11:30	Tea Break
11:30 - 13:00	Social media platforms: Twitter, FB, Instagram, YouTube (demonstrations, group work)
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 - 14:30	How to create online campaigns (lecture)
14:30 - 15:30	Challenges and insights to facilitate building a strong social media presence (discussion session)
15:30 - 15:45	Break
15:45 - 17:00	Tools for managing your online presence (lecture, demonstration, group work)
17:00 - 17:30	Feedback and way forward

Introducing the Session

Do a check-in with your audience.

Once everyone is settled in, **welcome everyone** to the session and introduce the training and its **goal**. Use this time to set expectations and create your desired atmosphere. Do you want the training to feel calm? Energetic? Solemn or light-hearted? The mood is under your control. Ask to make sure everyone has signed the attendance sheet.

Logistics

At the beginning of the workshop, take a moment to set some **rules**, such as being respectful when others talk or not discussing politics. Also, review logistics, such as telling them where the bathrooms are.

Go over the Agenda

Walk through the agenda together with the participants. Remember to share the **purpose and goal of the workshop again**. The more they understand what they will learn, the more engaged they can be.

You can write down the main point of the training for all participants to see. It can be as simple as “Today, I am going to learn about x.”

During the Session

- Start from the **simple and move to the complex**, especially if you are introducing new ideas. Check if everyone understands and allow participants to ask questions before moving on to a new topic or your next key point.
- Allow time for questions, but do not let questions and discussions throw off the schedule. Stick to your plan.
- At the end of each time slot, **summarise** the most important points.
- Use as **simple language** as possible. Clear ideas and language are best when teaching.

Activities

- Give clear instructions for group work and other activities, including their time.
- Explain why you are doing the activity and what you hope they will gain from it.
- If feedback and sharing from the activity are needed, be clear about what you want to know and how the group will share at the start. For example, “At the end, one group member should share their three main learning points. They will have a one-minute maximum to share this with the group.”

3-2-1 Feedback Session

Schedule time for a feedback session at the end of every training day. Each participant is given a paper in which they are asked to write:

- **Three** things they learned
- **Two** things they will make use of in their work or life
- **One** question they still have

Collect this feedback and read it to see what could be reviewed the next day to help clarify questions. If it is a one-day session, use this feedback to learn what went well and what to change next time to improve the training.

Closing the Session

- Summarise what you hope everyone learned, what skills they gained, and briefly discuss how they can apply what they learned in their everyday life.
- Refer back to the sentence you wrote down at the beginning of the training: “Today, I am going to learn x.” Ask the group if they agree that the sentence can change to “Today, I learned x.”
- Ask the group to reflect and share what they found most useful.
- Thank everyone for coming. Explain any next steps, if applicable.

5. SELF-REFLECTION

After the training, review the feedback and your ideas of how the training went. Did you achieve the goal you set at the beginning? If yes, write down what you felt helped

you succeed. Was it one particular session? Was it the format of how something was presented? Was there a key moment?

If you did not achieve the goal, review the training and determine what went wrong. Was the goal unrealistic? Was the training not planned out well enough? Were you lacking certain materials? Did you use too many lectures? What could you change next time to be more successful?

Checklist

At the end of the training, collect all the following and share them with the team:

- Completed attendance sheet with signatures
- Completed transport incentive sheet (if applicable)
- Completed feedback survey forms
- Completed activity reporting template
- Photos/ videos
- Any notes on flip charts or post-its (photographed and transcribed)
- Group discussion notes collected
- Audio feedback from participants

Credits:

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to #defyhatenow with ideas, time, positive energy, and creative collaborations that have linked peacebuilding action on the ground in Ethiopia, Cameroon, South Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya with online communities worldwide.

#defyhatenow dedicates this Field Guide to the citizens of Ethiopia, who are working together to create a more peaceful society.

Ethiopia implementation team 2023-2025

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