



**#DEFYHATE NOW**

**Social Media  
Hate Speech  
Mitigation**

**CAMEROON  
FIELD GUIDE**

**PILOT EDITION 2019-2020**





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# Social Media Hate Speech Mitigation Cameroon FIELD GUIDE

## #HATEFREECAMEROON

Beginning in 2014 in South Sudan, #defyhatenow engages youth in media literacy and peacebuilding through social media-oriented hate speech and online incitement to violence mitigation training. The #defyhatenow initiative includes citizen journalism, community dialogue and meetups, cultural and artistic activities as well as policy strategy and online media campaigns. Output from these activities, along with valuable publicly available tools, technical and knowledge resources are compiled into the comprehensive Social Media Hate Speech Mitigation Field Guide.

During this process and with the publication of the prototype Field Guide in late 2017, #defyhatenow acted as a base of action on media induced hate speech awareness to tackle conflict, support media literacy and address issues of migration and displacement through a multimodal and open technology-based manner aiming at youth, community leaders, journalists and other influential peacebuilding multipliers.

In Cameroon, on the initiation of UNESCO, and with the support

of the German Federal Foreign Office, #defyhatenow has been mandated to address the use of social media in the so-called “Anglophone Crisis,” civic conflict and destabilization issues including internal displacement, refugee movements and terrorism.

The #defyhatenow Field Guide Cameroon resource package is a tool to support and address community-based peacebuilding efforts in Cameroon with a bilingual edition in French and English. Published by r0g\_agency with partners including UNESCO, MBOAlab, LOYOC and #defyhatenow community organisation in Juba, South Sudan.

## #DEFYHATENOW SOUTH SUDAN PROJECT BACKGROUND

#defyhatenow responded to South Sudan’s ongoing civil crisis by addressing the roles played by social media users in exacerbating or helping to mitigate these issues, since the eruption of conflict in December 2013 and July 2016.

Our vision is to strengthen the voices and support the actions of youth, women’s and civil society organisations, peace activists and independent journalists in South Sudan to develop strategies as part of a global ‘dangerous speech’ mitigation community. The #defyhatenow initiative also aims to create an awareness of the impact online hate speech has in potentially fuelling conflict and offers training in how social media can be used in a constructive and peacebuilding manner.

#defyhatenow aims to raise awareness of and develop literacy for countering social media hate speech, conflict rhetoric and directed online incitement to violence. We aim to amplify ‘positive influencers’ in South Sudan, Cameroon, Ethiopia and worldwide, by occupying the social media landscape with voices of peacebuilding and counter-messaging, rather than leaving that space open to agents of conflict.

This Field Guide is your toolkit to work together for compassion & tolerance online.



#defyhatenow Street Theatre, Juba South Sudan [Left Photo]  
#defyhatenow Field Guide @Hagana Festival [Right Photo]

## SOCIAL MEDIA HATE SPEECH MITIGATION FIELD GUIDE

#defyhatenow Social Media Hate Speech Mitigation Field Guide offers digital tools and strategies to be used in grassroots communities & online campaigns for peacebuilding around the world. The “Field Guide” offers snapshots of local contexts, overview of grassroots projects and methodologies. Designed for use ‘in the field’ with related training materials and workshop resources to raise awareness, develop counter narratives & mitigate violence related to online hate speech.

“Incitement to violence is very specific, in that it needs strategic action to counter and requires community leaders and citizens to become involved and engaged in direct actions to mitigate the threat of violence erupting. While hate speech can form a basis for incitement, one can still use personal strategies to engage with speakers, bring down the tone of rhetoric and shift attitudes. Group strategies are needed to respond as a community to dangerous speech online and mitigate the factors contributing to violence offline.”  
Stephen Kovats, r0g\_agency, Berlin.

Developed and compiled by the #defyhatenow initiative with selected excerpts from materials published by collaborative partner organisations & networks, 2015–2020.

#defyhatenow is an urgent community peacebuilding, training and conflict reconciliation project that aims to amplify and strengthen the voices and support the actions of civil society, youth and IDP/refugee organisations in South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Cameroon, Ethiopia, neighbouring regions and the global diaspora online.

## HYRACBOX A “HOTSPOT FOR CHANGE”

HyracBox is a mobile, portable, RaspberryPi powered offline mini-server for facilitators to use in remote, crisis or offline environments where access to both power and internet is challenging. With HyracBox multiple users can access key #defyhatenow materials, including the full contents of the Field Guides, along with a multitude of further open educational resources (OERs), websites and pieces of training using a standard WiFi connection from any mobile device.

As internet shutdowns, distribution and access to information are often challenging issues in conflict or remote areas where technical or formalised education infrastructure may also be lacking, HyracBox presents an opportunity to enhance IT and media literacy skills. Linking these with practical peacebuilding and education development tools, HyracBox allows local facilitators to sensitize their communities on information, resources, and opportunities. Essentially a “Hotspot for Change” that can be taken anywhere, project coordinators and partners can also load current news and videos, allowing their trainees in remote areas to download and share this content for free, bringing important media content off-grid.

HyracBox forms a key element of the ‘Social Media Hate Speech Mitigation Field Guide’ package for Cameroon, including #defyhatenow material in both English and French. The Field Guide along with HyracBox coupled with ‘Peacebuilder Makerspaces’ form a resource ‘core’ that can be seen and understood as a simple form of community knowledge base. With minimal cost these resources can then be established in numerous locations across the country to make peacebuilding, vocational and media literacy work visible and more interactive within a community.

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# 1

# Social Media & Conflict



# 01 SOCIAL MEDIA & CONFLICT CONTENTS

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PEACEBUILDING AND HATE SPEECH POLICY IN CAMEROON

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#DEFYHATENOW | CHAPTER 1

# SOCIAL MEDIA & CONFLICT



## HOW TO IDENTIFY HATE SPEECH

“

Hate speech is a communication that denigrates people on the basis of their membership of a particular group. This can include any form of expression, such as images, plays, and songs, as well as speech. Some definitions extend the concept of hate speech to include communications that foster a climate of prejudice and intolerance – these kinds of communications may fuel discrimination, hostility and violent attacks later on.

”

Source: **DW Hate Speech FAQ** <https://p.dw.com/p/119ku>

The European Court of Human Rights, in a definition adopted by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, considers 'hate speech' as: "all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility towards minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin."



## SOCIAL MEDIA, CONFLICT & COMMUNITY PEACEBUILDING IN CAMEROON

By **Besong Bawack Mallet**

The different definitions or perceptions people have about what constitutes hate speech and what differentiates hate speech from free speech has always been an issue with the different stakeholders involved in mitigating the spread of hate speech in Cameroon digital spaces. The activities of some organisations to counter hate speech narratives have been (mis)interpreted by various political actors and diasporas, people from different ethnic groups and socio-cultural backgrounds who view messages and activities of the different institutions as infringing on their human rights, as well as undermining their different identities, integrity or personality. Due to these diverging views as to what constitutes hate speech by different actors, the efforts of organisations and institutions in the digital space through hate speech mitigation often face strong opposition which makes their efforts towards building sustainable peace very

difficult. Nonetheless, the organisations and institutions listed above remain very active in the struggle to eliminate hate online speech in Cameroon, despite all these complexities and drawbacks.

Several organisations play major roles in Cameroon with a focus on combating hate speech through digital media spaces. These organisations carry out social media literacy and awareness campaigns to counter existing hate speech by propagating more positive narratives, like love, social cohesion, tolerance and mutual respect across many digital spaces like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc. Some of these organisations and institutions include the Cameroon Digital Coalition, Local Youth Corner Cameroon (LOYOC), Network for Solidarity, Empowerment and Transformation for All (NEWSETA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Network for Community Development (NECOD), STRAWACADEMY, ADEV, Big Steps Outreach Cameroon (BONET), The PCC Peace Office, the Cameroon Communication Council, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC), etc.

### Common Digital Platforms in Cameroon

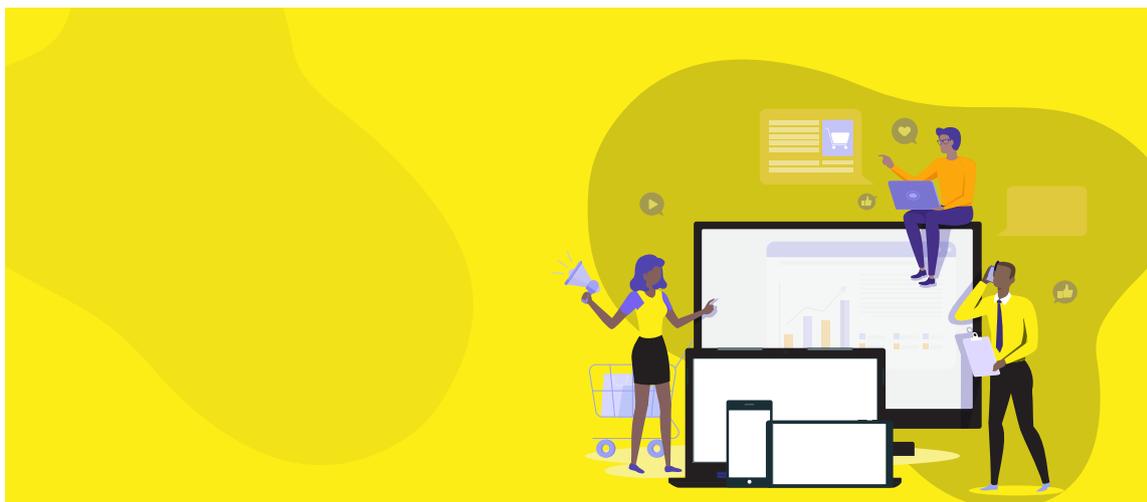
Since the introduction of the internet and subsequent use of social media in Cameroon in early 2000, there has been a steady increase in the number of users per year. By December 2000, Cameroon had 20,000 internet users and by June 2019, internet users in Cameroon drastically increased to 6,128,422 with Facebook alone having more than half of the total number of internet users as subscribers (3,473,000) between 2006 and 2019.<sup>1</sup>

In Cameroon, the most widely used social media platform is Facebook, closely followed by WhatsApp. Pinterest, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Snapchat are also gaining steam in the digital media space in Cameroon though still a wide gap compared with the growing rate of Facebook and WhatsApp in Cameroon. Social media in Cameroon is increasingly being used for various reasons including work, entertainment, communication, business, education etc. According to GlobalStats2, between November 2018 and November 2019, Facebook is the most used social media platform in Cameroon with 86.76% subscription, while Pinterest: (7.55%), Instagram (2.17%) Twitter (2.13%), YouTube (1.33%) and LinkedIn (0.01%) have slower expansion rates.

WhatsApp and Snapchat, although not represented in the diagram above, have also come to stay and occupy a huge percentage of the Cameroon digital space in recent times. Thus, these platforms cannot be under looked in the Cameroon social media landscape.



## COMMON DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN CAMEROON



<https://defyhatenow.org/common-digital-platforms-in-cameroon-and-their-usage-2/>

### Online to Offline: Impact of activities in digital spaces

Hate speech has been visible in Cameroon for decades, even before the introduction of the internet and social media. This phenomenon has been common among politicians, administrators and civil servants as well as children and youths.

In fact, Cameroonians of all walks of life and age have used words which can today be categorised as hate speech and they have done so consciously or unconsciously.<sup>3</sup> Offline hate speech has existed in major towns and cities like Yaoundé, Douala, Maroua, Bafoussam, Buea, Bamenda, etc which are much more cosmopolitan in nature but the spread of such dangerous speeches only intensified as people moved from region to region and to a greater extent with the introduction of social media. The effects were only felt by the targeted individuals or groups who in most cases were left with nothing more than frustration and a feeling of anger, hate and revenge. The emergence of the internet and social media increased the use and spread of hate speech in Cameroon as information that before now remained between the perpetrator and the victims was able to spread and affect other individuals or groups, thus increasing its effect as it was seen in different communities and in the conflict situation in Cameroon.

The current Crisis in the Far North, Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon remains complicated because of fake news, propaganda, mis/disinformation and other forms of hate speech disseminated online. Unlike the Bamileke War (also known as *guerre cachée*) between 1955 and 1964, based on grievances of marginalisation (tribalism and cultural divide) and hate against the Bemileke People and anti-colonialisation sentiments and which took place without influence from the availability of the internet and social media in Cameroon.

Digital spaces today have come to act as mediums that transmit the hate speech that once existed offline to go beyond certain limits and exacerbate the feeling of hate and revenge both offline and online. The motives behind the current crisis in the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon remain a great challenge as online radicalisation has increased, arguably leading to the current offline violence that is perpetrated by sympathisers of the conflict from different angles.

Videos/images purporting to show abuses on both sides have circulated on social media, fanning tensions already sky-high on the ground in the conflict areas. Propaganda and false news stories proliferate. For instance, the display of beheaded bodies of forces of law and order online only increases frustration and radicalism within the affected community and increases the chances of more violence and likewise, an image or a video showing the brutal killing of a separatist fighter also radicalises both fighters and non-fighters, thus creating a cycle of violence that loops from online to offline.

A case in point that shows how digital spaces have influenced offline reactions and violence is the speech of a top government official, who on the 22 of September 2017 on CRTV radio in Buea made a public statement which sparked huge protest on October 1 2017 and huge counter reactions online.

He said: “very early in the morning, groups of people were seen walking on the streets with the aim to attack public buildings and institutions... we will not continue to tolerate such protests. If the dogs continue to go to the streets to bite, they will meet the security forces.”

This was an act of hate on a group of people who went to the streets to protest against real or perceived feelings of marginalisation of the Anglophones in Cameroon and non-respect of the Anglo-Saxon values in English Cameroon. The public statement of the governor pushed children, youths and the old to the streets on October 1, 2017 for being referred to as dogs and to demonstrate attributes of a dog in revenge as described by the said official and also to commemorate the self-proclaimed independence of ‘Ambazonia’.<sup>4</sup>

This statement and protest marked a turning point in the crisis in the English speaking regions of Cameroon that has today become an armed conflict. The speech radicalised and instrumentalised young people who were met with fury as described by the governor. Statements like this, among many others, have made resolving the conflict in Northwest and the Southwest regions almost impossible.

Also, both sides are using inflammatory/derogatory/offensive rhetoric such as: the military calls the separatists “terrorists,” while the separatists; with many parts of the Cameroonian diaspora; have accused the military of “genocide” and also refer to the them as “La Republique Terrorist Soldiers”. This inflammatory rhetoric, which is mostly spread online, translates into much of the violence that is perpetrated offline.



### Policy makers role in mitigating/promoting hate speech

The existence of hate speech on digital spaces and offline is not without the knowledge of policy makers, in fact many of them allegedly perpetrate hate speech at different levels. Some policy makers and politicians in turn have been seen to take advantage of the situation for their own political gains. Some even propagate ethnic differences which form the basis of most conflicts in Cameroon with the aim of polarising the people on the basis of tribes and political affiliation. Some policy makers subject the actions of their people online/offline to misinterpretations.

A clear example of misinterpretation was following the 2018 presidential election in Cameroon when a popular professor and Politian (Bemileke) made a statement that “had it been he had an opportunity to apply to be born as a Bulu5 in Cameroon, he would have done so”, and this was widely interpreted or misinterpreted in different ways. Many politicians and policy makers claimed he was propagating hate speech or tribalism, but others think that he was openly propagating against the high level of tribalism in Cameroon which has played out in the favour of some groups such as the Bulu at the disfavour of other ethnic groups like the Bamileke and others. Also, the political party of the politician has been viewed as being very tribal due to their militancy.

There is an increasing trend of online activities undertaken by government and policy makers. Certain decisions for instance, have been taken following online petitions, online advocacy efforts and comments. We can draw some connection between what people say and do online (in terms of advocacy and civil society engagement) and the reaction of the politicians and policy makers offline. Some offline and offline endeavours have helped shape the political landscape of the country. For instance, when there is any information spread especially online, the Cameroon government reacts through its ministers of communication and territorial administration by organising press conferences or making public statements to clarify to the population on the alleged or real issues exposed, this demonstrates that the government is keen and critically engaged on social media. This may in part explain why the recent bill to criminalise tribalism and hate speech was proposed by parliament and promulgated into law on December 24 2019 by the President of the Republic of Cameroon (Read in ENGLISH and FRENCH) in parliament to respond to these urgent challenges of the government policy of national integration and living together in Cameroon. The law also emphasises severe punishment when the author of hate speech is a civil servant or official of political party, media, non-governmental organization or religious institution and especially when committed via social media, press or television, radio or other means which facilitates public consumption.



### Online Safety and Identifying / Mitigating misinformation

Protecting the population from the potential dangers of online engagement and creating awareness on the effective use of digital spaces remains an important issue for civil society and most governments, including the government of Cameroon. The fastest and most far reaching methods of educating the population on the safety of what they read, comment, share and post online has been through media sensitisations and caravans. As much of the content we are talking about is shared on social and digital media, the best action on awareness is also through digital media. This action has been taken by the government of Cameroon along with national and international civil society organisations in Cameroonian. A caravan6 is also a good way of creating awareness if the intention is to reach out to both young and old generations. This strategy was used by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education in July 2019 at Nkolinda, Yaounde.



## Children's Access and Citizen Safety Online

Children's presence online in Cameroon happens for several motives including: research, social media networking and online gaming. Though most digital platforms recognise the international law on the protection of children's rights and have limited account creation to 18 years and above, or under 18 years with parental control, most children do not comply with the terms of the platforms but rather falsify their identities to get registered especially on social media platforms. This further makes it difficult to control the presence and safety of children online.

The most effective and efficient way to keep children safe online is to invest in educating them on the critical and professional use of digital spaces. They also need to be made aware of the dangers of (mis) using the internet other than for the reasons for which the platforms were created. If we go on putting child restrictions alone on social media and internet spaces, we risk sending the children to undertake their own adventurous journeys online to discover what parents are holding back. That is why educating children on the DOs and DON'Ts on engaging online is very important and most preferable as it offers opportunities for the children to make responsible decisions on their own.

Engaging schools and students in offline, face to face and media awareness campaigns is also an effective method of educating internet users about the importance of fact checking before coming to a conclusion on what they read, comment, post or share online. This is also a way of determining whether or not any information encountered is true or false, rumour or propaganda.

Sharing educational content offline through billboards, posters, fliers, stickers, and other offline means can also help to keep people more informed of the dangers of absorbing uncritically what they read online and how to be more selective with information they meet on digital spaces.



## HATE SPEECH LAWS, GUIDELINES & DEFINITIONS

Hate speech laws are a relatively modern phenomenon that appeared in Europe in the wake of World War II. The idea behind such laws was to curb the kinds of anti-Semitic and racist propaganda that gave rise to the Holocaust. Germany, Poland, Hungary and Austria passed hate legislation decades ago. Many other countries have since followed suit. For example, under Kenyan law, a person commits an offense if they stir up "ethnic hatred". France goes further. Its laws forbid any communication intended to incite discrimination, hatred or harm regarding ethnicity, nation, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or handicap.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), a UN treaty, calls on governments to prevent hate speech. Article 20(2) of the ICCPR says: "any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law."

The Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa considers 'hate speech' to be "material which, judged within context sanctions, promotes or glamorizes violence based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or mental or physical disability" or "propaganda for war; incitement of imminent violence; or advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion, and that constitutes incitement to cause harm."

Source: **DW Hate Speech explained** <https://p.dw.com/p/119ku>



## HATE SPEECH & VIOLENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

What exactly is online hate speech?

“

Hate speech often shows up online, especially on social media. Each platform has its own definition of hate speech and their approaches to dealing with it are evolving.

”



## HATE SPEECH GUIDELINES



**Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards#hate-speech>

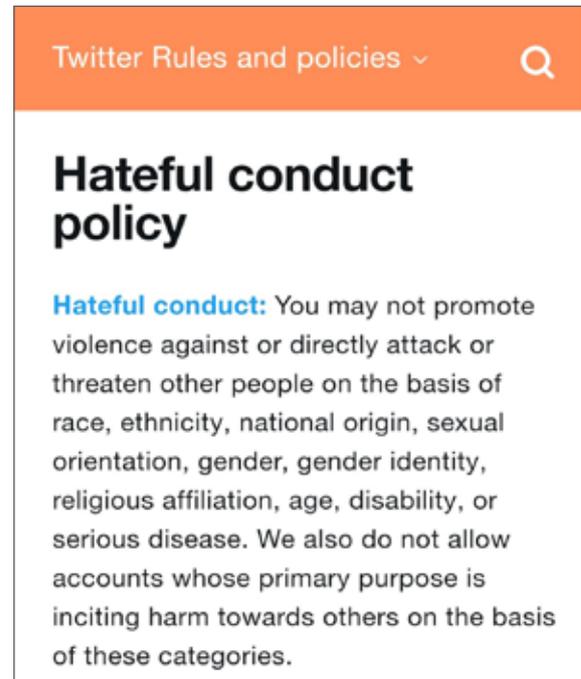
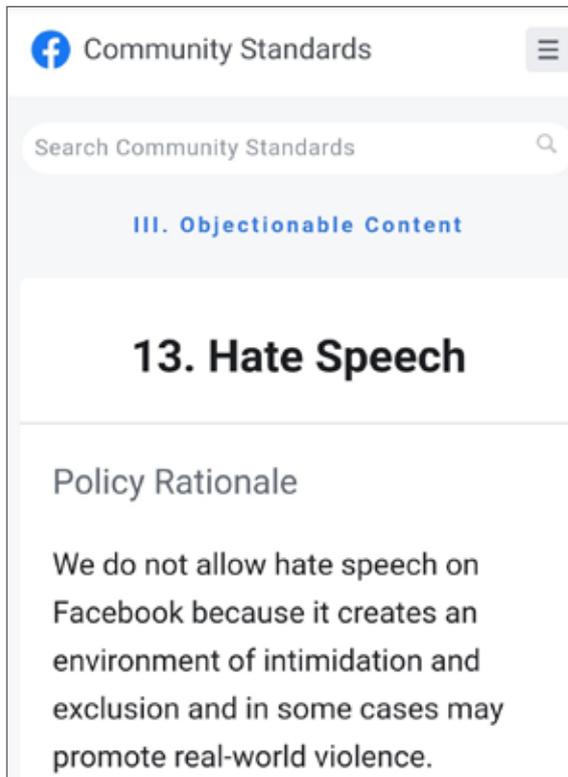
“Facebook removes hate speech, which includes content that directly attacks people based on their: Race, Ethnicity, National origin, Religious affiliation, Sexual orientation, Sex, gender, or gender identity, or Serious disabilities or diseases. We allow humor, satire, or social commentary related to these topics. Sometimes people share content containing someone else’s hate speech for the purpose of raising awareness or educating others about that hate speech. We expect people to clearly indicate their purpose, which helps us better understand why they shared that content. We carefully review reports of threatening language to identify serious threats of harm to public and personal safety. We remove credible threats of physical harm to individuals.”



**Twitter**

<https://support.twitter.com/articles/18311>

“Hateful conduct: You may not promote violence against or directly attack or threaten other people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, disability, or disease. Violent threats (direct or indirect): You may not make threats of violence or promote violence, including threatening or promoting terrorism.”



### YouTube

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2801939>



Hate speech is not allowed on YouTube. We encourage free speech and try to defend your right to express unpopular points of view, but we don't permit hate speech. Hate speech refers to content that promotes violence against or has the primary purpose of inciting hatred against individuals or groups based on certain attributes, such as: age, caste, race or ethnic origin, immigration status, religion, disability, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, veteran status.



### Whatsapp

<https://www.whatsapp.com/legal?eea=0#terms-of-service>

Whatsapp Terms of Service prohibit, publishing falsehoods and engaging in illegal, threatening, intimidating, hateful, and racially or ethnically offensive behavior.

You must access and use our Services only for legal, authorized, and acceptable purposes. You will not use (or assist others in using) our Services in ways that: (b) are illegal, obscene, defamatory, threatening, intimidating, harassing, hateful, racially, or ethnically offensive, or instigate or encourage conduct that would be illegal, or otherwise inappropriate, including promoting violent crimes; (c) involve publishing falsehoods, misrepresentations, or misleading statements; (d) impersonate someone.



## COMMUNITY STANDARDS & HATE SPEECH POLICY

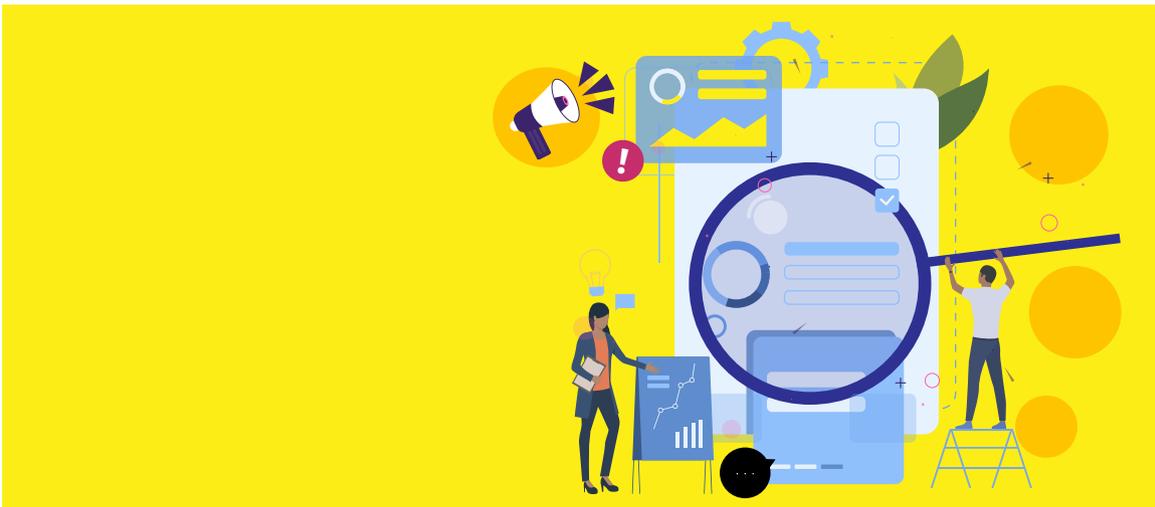


<https://defyhatenow.org/did-you-know-that-facebook-and-twitter-have-policies-against-hate-speech/>



## HOW TO REPORT HATE SPEECH

Social media platforms have been criticised for their handling of complaints. They are not always responsive to user concerns and can be slow to address reports of misuse and abuse online, but they do continue to assess new ways to monitor & counter hate speech. Check each platform for their latest reporting tools & guides.



<https://defyhatenow.org/how-to-report-hate-speech-2/>

**VIDEO SERIES** By Peacetechlab [USB Stick]

**Report Hate Speech on Facebook**

[https://youtu.be/\\_kRNx1WHAm0](https://youtu.be/_kRNx1WHAm0)

**Report Hate Speech on WhatsApp**

<https://youtu.be/1PIHuMI0ndQ>

**Report Hate Speech on Twitter**

<https://youtu.be/tLwgoTgbf8E>

**How to report hate speech on YouTube**

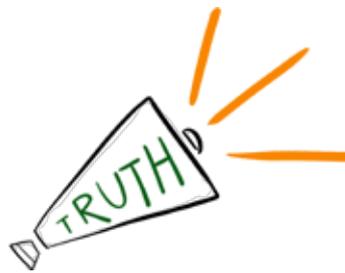
<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802027>

If you find content that violates our hate speech policy, report it to YouTube for review. Instructions on how to report violations of Community Guidelines can be found on the link above, or watch the video.

<https://youtu.be/45suVEYFCyc>

**How to block someone on WhatsApp**

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/en/iphone/20950271/?category=5245250>



## SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONFLICT IN CAMEROON

### A LEXICON OF HATE SPEECH TERMS

<https://www.peacetechlab.org/cameroon-lexicon>

PeaceTech Lab works to reduce violent conflict using technology, media, and data to accelerate and scale peacebuilding efforts. PeaceTech Lab & LOYOC conducted research to better understand the connection between online hate speech and violence on the ground and aims for this Lexicon to serve as a pivotal resource for individuals and organizations fighting against hate speech in Cameroon.

### CAMEROON'S DEEPENING CRISIS

A rich and complicated colonial history, poor governance, a deterioration in rule of law, corruption and suppression of free speech and human rights have created a steadily worsening conflict scenario in Cameroon known as the Anglophone Crisis. The crisis has cost hundreds of lives and displaced an estimated 200,000 in the country's Northwest and Southwest regions since it began in 2016. Presidential elections in October 2018 accelerated the crisis and atrocities continue to be committed by both sides.

### PUTTING AN END TO A DANGEROUS TREND

Within this context, PeaceTech Lab undertook extensive research to understand the role that online hate speech plays in the ongoing crisis. Rooted in a series of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with expert insights from local Cameroonians, *Social Media and Conflict in Cameroon*, published in October 2018, identifies and explains inflammatory and offensive terms that contribute to the Anglophone Crisis while offering alternative words and phrases that can be used to prevent and stop the spread of hate speech.

Selected Examples: Please note that the sample posts as well as the world clouds not only contain offensive and inflammatory terms, but also obscene terms.

## 1. TERRORIST

Other spellings and related references: Boko Haramist, anti-Balaka, jihadist, secessionists, insurgents



**Definition:** A terrorist is a person who uses unlawful violence and intimidation - especially against civilians - in the pursuit of political aims.

Since the beginning of the Boko Haram incursion from Nigeria into the far Northern part of Cameroon in 2014, this term has increasingly been used to refer to Cameroonians of the Far North, where there is a large Hausa and Muslim population. As explained by one focus group participant, “Muslims for example are considered terrorists because Boko Haram’s activities are linked to the muslim faith.” In the context of the Anglophone crisis and the rising tensions involving pro-independence actors in the Western regions, this term is also often used to refer to anybody associated with the Northwest and Southwest of Cameroon, and in some instances is meant to designate all Anglophones as ‘Les Anglos sont des terroristes’ (The Anglos are all terrorists). In turn, separatist groups and leaders refer to Cameroonian soldiers as ‘terrorist soldiers.’

**Why this term is offensive/inflammatory:** Using this term against a general group or population based on their geographic location (i.e., proximity to Boko Haram presence) or faith (in this case Islam) is inflammatory because it designates entire groups of people as posing a threat to the country and its way of life.

Depending on the speaker, it is also used to delegitimize an opposing person’s or groups’ grievances, actions and intentions. It is a particularly potent accusation on both sides of the Anglophone crisis because of how this term is used by various actors to demonize some groups and to legitimize the use of force against them.

Notably, the Cameroonian government uses this term to legitimize military interventions in the North West and South West Regions [Anglophone] regions, and pro-independence fighters often refer to the military as “colonial terrorist forces or bandits.” Being a terrorist is associated with being “unlawful, violent, a criminal, and a traitor.”

In addition, Cameroon has recently adopted an anti-terrorism law that gives broad powers to the authorities to detain without trial those accused of terrorism. “Everybody is in fear of being accused of being a terrorist,” according to a focus group participant. “Somebody accused to be a terrorist against the state can be arrested, disappeared.” In this context, the term is thus also used to defame, intimidate, and create fear.

Alternative words that could be used: Muslim, Northerner, Southwesterner, Northwesterner.



and 'fou,' which is an adjective meaning 'mad' or 'foolish.' It is mostly used by Francophone Cameroonians to refer in a derogatory way to Anglophone Cameroonians (who are mostly based in the Northwest and Southwest regions), implying that they are 'fools,' behave foolishly, or are stupid ("anglo-bête"). As explained by a focus group participant, "If you call me Anglo-fou, it means you are saying I am mad or I am a mad man."

**Why this term is offensive/inflammatory:** This term is considered particularly offensive when used by a Francophone towards an Anglophone Cameroonian. As one workshop participant noted, it is offensive because it implies that Anglophones are "primitive, uncivilized, like 'villageois' (villagers)". It connotes that they do not know what they do, and are somehow inferior to the French-speaking majority.

It is important to note that this term is rooted in widespread prejudices against Anglophones that stem back to Cameroon's colonial past. The partition into a British and French territory introduced two vastly different administrative, educational, and legal systems, as well as linguistic and cultural differences that persist in part to this day -- long after the merging of the two territories into modern-day Cameroon. This historical division has been fertile ground to misunderstandings, feelings of exclusion, and even animosity, as the Anglophone population has felt marginalized and neglected since independence.

A focus group participant explained how expressions like "Vous les anglo-fou, vous raisonnez à gauche' (you Anglo-crazies, you think on the left)" illustrate this well: "French Cameroonians drove on the right-hand side of the road, while British Cameroonians drove on the left-hand side of the road as in Britain. When Cameroonians of both sides met, there were usually differences in approach from a cultural perspective and these misunderstandings led to the use of the phrase "c'est les gens a gauche (French for "they are people on the left")," referring to the people of Anglophone Cameroon.

This term is used in the current context of the Anglophone crisis to dismiss the issues and grievances voiced by protesters and opposition in the Northwest and Southwest regions. If all Anglophones are 'mad' or 'fools,' their demands and actions are illegitimate and 'foolish.' As stated by another workshop participant, using this term is "...a means to make the Anglophones feel inferior," as well as for "Francophones to characterize their superiority." Many participants shared the view that this widespread prejudice has had a systemic effect. In many contexts, as one noted, "Anglophones are afraid of speaking in English because of the negative reaction it will provoke." It is a divisive term that foments resentment. Alternative words that could be used: Cameroonian, English-speaking Cameroonian or Anglophone, Northwesterner/Southwesterner, my brother of English expression.



## ISSUES & RISKS IN RESEARCHING THE LEXICON OF HATE SPEECH TERMS

### 3) Limited Understanding of Hate Speech Concept

Many of the terms identified in this study as offensive and inflammatory have their origins in old stereotypes and prejudices. As these terms and their impact now find themselves being exacerbated and reinforced in the context of the Anglophone crisis, a systematic conversation around hate speech has only recently begun in Cameroon. Few individuals and organizations are aware of and understand what constitutes hate speech, let alone are able to understand its polarizing and exacerbating role in the context of current Anglophone crisis. This impacted the quality of responses to the survey and well as the discussions during the validation workshops.

### 4) Sensitivities and Parameters Concerning Hate Speech

In addition to concerns around privacy and security, a number of challenges were encountered during focus group discussions around the nature of hate speech, the deep rooted issues it can evoke (e.g., related to national identity, conflict, prejudice, etc.) and the feelings it can trigger (especially in those targeted by

it). During group discussions, participants did not always exercise caution or consideration for what other participants might feel when they are targeted by an offensive or inflammatory term. This made it difficult to create an open discussion around the definition and context of specific hate speech words and phrases. Facilitators and participants were carefully selected and diligently prepared in advance of discussions. This helped to manage the difficult dynamics encountered when navigating heated discussions and emotionally difficult moments as participants recalled situations when they were the object of offensive speech.

### Download PDF Social Media and Conflict in Cameroon

<https://www.peacetechlab.org/s/Cameroon-Lexicon-PeaceTech-Lab>

<https://www.peacetechlab.org/cameroon-lexicon>



## EXERCISE: DEFINITIONS AND MEANING

Consider the definition of words and the potential for harm in their meanings.

When interacting with people, both offline and online, selecting your words carefully is important. Before you write, post, share statements, comments or jokes online, it's advisable to think about the terms you use, as these might offend groups of people.

Ask yourself: "How would I feel if I was part of the group being offended?"

Always weigh the impact your words might have, take time to read through your own text, or statements and if need be take a break and come back later when calmer.

### Questions to Consider:

- Understanding of Hate Speech terms and intentions
- What it means and where one might be spreading it unconsciously.
- The need to contemplate the words we use when online and offline.
- The importance of taking precautions and the need to ask oneself questions based on empathy and tolerance both online and offline.



## HATE SPEECH AND VIOLENT CONFLICT IN CAMEROON

### Report by Local Youth Corner Cameroon (LOYOC) 2019

[www.loyocameroon.org](http://www.loyocameroon.org)

The increase in violent conflict in Cameroon has been captured by available literature as an outcome of poor governance, poverty, discrimination, marginalisation and the list continues. Nevertheless, the role of hate speech, which seemingly has become a community to national problems, has not been satisfactorily examined as a major driver of violent conflict in Cameroon. This phenomenon grew from the days of colonialism, to independence and to the birth of democracy and now today. This paper (research work) examines the nexus between hate speech and violent conflict in Cameroon.

The secondary data used in this report was supplemented with offline and online interviews and surveys, focused group discussions with young people, traditional and religious authorities, social media

influencers, civil society actors and government officials identified from five regions in the four geo-political regions of Cameroon; South West, Far North, Littoral, Centre and North West regions; and diaspora communities. We argue that hate speech, which appears in the forms of propaganda, fake news, and disinformation is destroying social cohesion in Cameroon and becoming very prevalent among politicians during elections as well as civilians against government or citizens that is fanning violent conflict in Cameroon.

The report presents the contradiction between hate speech and freedom of speech. It further demonstrates the process involved in hate speech leading to violence as well as presents examples of commonly used hate terms and the main authors of hate speech in the country.

Our research emphasizes the prevailing influence of hate speech in fuelling the current crisis in the Far North, Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon. We highlight eight positive practices undertaken by young people in Cameroon toward solving hate speech. We suggest that among many recommended solutions that public condemnations of hate speech by government and citizens are not enough. We strongly call for legislation to curtail and penalise users of hate speech.

Keywords: **Hate Speech; Violent Conflict; Propaganda**

LOYOC REPORT CO-AUTHORS: Kweitsu Richard, Besong Bawack Mallet  
EDITOR(S): Achaleke Christian Ieke

## **DEMOCRATIC VALUES & PRACTICES IN CAMEROON**

As we strive to entrench democratic values, freedoms and rights have emerged as the positive practices for an ideal form of governance, many countries are enjoying the beauty of these but are grappling on curtailing some of the negative outcomes of the misuse of these democratic practices. Violent conflict ranging from political violence to civil wars and armed conflicts has characterised many countries across the world which lack the structures and capacity to effectively manage the implementation of their democracy. These democratic values allow citizens to question governments in respect of the social contract, speak and protest as well as participate fully in the electoral process. For example, the birth of multi-party politics in Cameroon affected the country's socio-political life with tendency of "tensions, conflicts, blockages and sometimes violence on the part of some actors and political parties" (Ngole. 1996: 6).

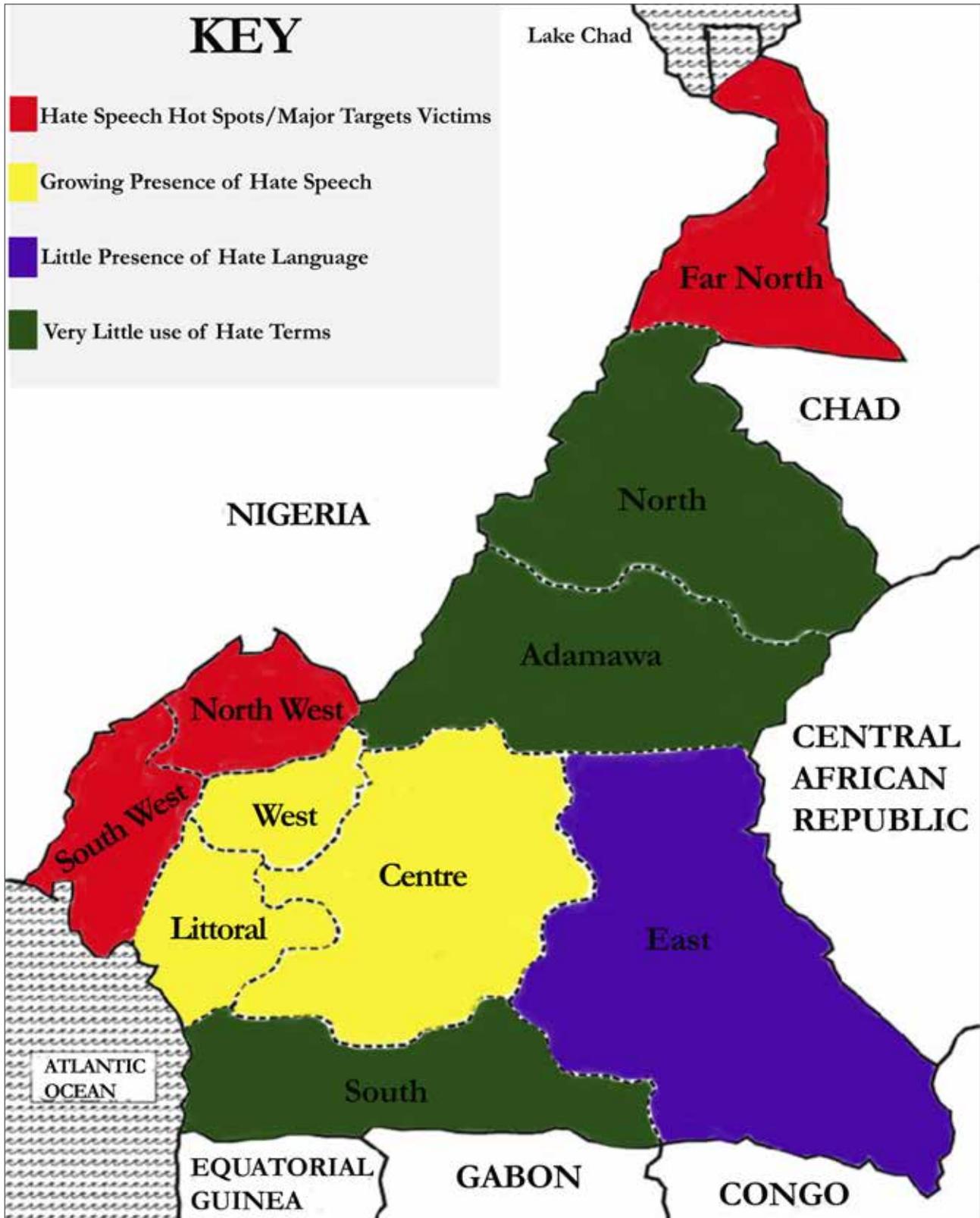
## **SOCIO-CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY**

Since the independence of Cameroon the socio-cultural diversity ranging from over 200 ethnic groups, several religions and two international languages presented a great opportunity for strength. Unfortunately, over time this dividend has not been properly exploited (Nyamnjoh & Rowlands; 1998). Culturally, Cameroon is divided into four main parts (Sudano-sahel, Grassfield, Sawa and Fang Beti) and linguistically, between the Anglophone (English) and Francophone (French). The population predominantly described as Francophone constitute approximately 80% of the total population with the Anglophone minority constituting the remaining 20%. In all, Cameroon has ten geographical regions (Far North, North, Adamawa, Center, South, East, South, Littoral, Southwest and Northwest) with eight (8) located in the Francophone region and the remaining two (2) in the Anglophone region.

To understand the concept of hate speech in greater depth, this research sampled responses from five (5) regions in Cameroon; comprising the Centre, Littoral, Northwest, Southwest and Far North. This diversity has rather exposed the country to challenges that has grown from public questioning into protest and most recently violent conflict. Violent conflict that can significantly be seen as a major negative outcome of Cameroon's diversity and mis-uses of democratic values has affected the country's unity. According to Human Rights Watch, violent conflicts in Cameroon has recently displaced over 714,100 people, properties destroyed with over 1000 lives lost in the Far North, North West and South West Regions of Cameroon.



# MAP OF HATE SPEECH IN CAMEROON BY REGION



Source: Hate Speech and Violent Conflict in Cameroon  
Researchers for LOYOC Report



## RISE OF HATE SPEECH ON SOCIAL MEDIA

One of the devastating offshoots in Cameroons' diversity, which is fuelling this violent conflict, is the rise of hate speech (Eyango, 2018:63). The use of hate speech in the forms of propaganda, fake news, insults by politicians, government officials and civilians is not a new phenomenon in Cameroon.

From the Far North of Cameroon, the terrorist group uses hate speech including; "western education is forbidden" to foment violence on Christians and secular lifestyle. Similarly, some respondents share that the use of hate language on Anglophones by French speaking Cameroonians contributed to the gradual Radicalisation of them and subsequently contributed to the current violence in North West and South West. PeaceTech Lab in the Lexicon of Hate Speech terms in Cameroon describes the effect of hate speech to dehumanize opponents, exacerbate feelings of frustration and hate, and calling for violent action.

The emergence of social media has increased the use and spread of hate speech across Cameroon. Activist of the Anglophone crisis, security forces, government, armed groups and civilians use these platforms to spread hateful messages.

An interviewee shared that;

“

The inability to curtail or check social media has made users of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp to disseminate hate languages, fake news and misinform with the defence of exercising their human right to freedom of expression.

”

Considering the current political instability in Cameroon, it is imperative to understand the concept of hate speech to develop a robust strategic framework to combat it. This research will seek to understand the concept of hate speech within the political, social and economic context of Cameroon from the perspective of young people, provide some commonly used hate terms and phrases. This report is developed with the aim of providing the reader, academia, practitioners and policy makers with an insight on the relationship between hate speech and violent conflict as well as some efforts carried out by young people and recommendations on how to prevent and combat hate speech in Cameroon.

### Key Hate Speech Terms and phrases in Cameroon

Hate speech has increasingly become a major problem in Cameroon. In order to be able to capture and confirm the existence and use of inflammatory languages in Cameroon, a survey was carried out through questionnaires in addition to a focus group discussion. Among over 130 people diversely selected based on their understanding of the topic and location, were people from 5 of the 10 regions of Cameroon and a few from the diaspora. Respondents included adults, women and youths from different walks of life, academia, government, social media influencers and celebrities, as well as some students.

The survey was used to understand whether or not respondents from the selected group and geographical location affirm the use and prevalence of messages considered offensive, derogatory or inflammatory on other people or groups.

In Cameroon, several terms could generally be regarded as hate speech in a given context. Decades ago, attention on the impact of hate speech was neglected both in policy and action. This gave legitimacy to users of the terms, thus making receiver victims who felt no one cares about how they feel.

Our findings during this research identified terms as most recurrent both online and offline. These terms collaborate with an earlier compilation by PeaceTechLab in the Lexicon of Hate Terms in Cameroon (reference above). In this research, we reproduce some of these key terms and their resultant meanings

and illustrate with examples how they have contributed to the worsening crisis in the Far North, Northwest and the South West regions of the country. It should be noted that these words are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. Selected examples of these terms below.

Example: Cam no go/ Craffi

**CAM NO GO** is an expression in the “pidgin” language which stands for something or someone who is a visitor or settles somewhere but it/he/she never leaves. The term emerged in 1996 when the then Governor of the South West region of Cameroon in a public speech to refer to settler of his region who hailed from the North West Region. One of our respondents shared that the word was triggered by grievances bored by South Westerners because most of the North westerners who settled in the South West had become very successful, owning lands, properties and working in the plantations. The outbreak of the Anglophone crisis saw the re-emergence of this term as Anglophone critics of the Anglophone crisis claimed the North Westerners residing in their South West are the ones fomenting the violence. This word is widely used among English Speaking Cameroonians and most recently by a wide range of people from both sides of the country to incite infighting by creating a divide.

Also the term **GRAFFI** is usually used on social media alongside “Came no go”. It is derived from the word “grass field” one of the geo-political parts of Cameroon, and has been used to describe people from the Northwest and West Regions of Cameroon. This term is used by both Francophone and Anglophone Cameroonians to refer to people from this region basically because of their socio-cultural lifestyle and attitude. “I use it to demonstrate that the person is uncivilised, dirty, greedy, uncultured, and stingy” said one respondent. People from the North West when referred to this way find it offensive because it is mostly used to refer to them as foreigners.

This word is also inflammatory in the way it’s used and the meaning derived from the context. It can also be used to demonstrate that the target is uncivilised, greedy, uncultured, and stingy.

## LES BAMENDA

The term has been generally used to refer to every English speaking Cameroonian in a derogatory way. It binds its victims to “Bamenda” a city (regional capital) in the North West region of Cameroon. The word is used to group all English speakers and present them as a homogenous group which is different from French speakers. It is usually used when francophones want to refer to an Anglophone with derogatory characters such as; stupid, low class, backward. This term was identified as the most recurring term used offline which is pejorative to English speaking Cameroonians. One of the French speaking respondents shared that he uses “le Bamenda” to refer to his domestic help and nanny at home. Les Bamenda” is also used to describe an Anglophone who, faced with a situation of injustice or marginalisation, confronts the person involved out rightly, claiming his rights. Under such circumstances, the response usually given is “n’ammene pas votre Bamenda ici” or “nous ne sommes pas à Bamenda ici.”

## Prevalence and use of hate speech in Cameroon

In understanding the prevalence of hate speech from the perspective of respondents across the regions of Cameroon, our sample population all confirmed that hate speech is a real deal. Evidence from all the respondents somewhat agreed on this, though we noticed the degree varies by region. The Southwest suffers a higher threat of hate speech. Meanwhile, although respondents in the centre think hate speech is prevalent; their idea of how prevalent the phenomenon is; is relatively lower when compared with the other regions of the country. Many respondents in the Northwest as well as those in the Far North think hate speech is prevalent in Cameroon.

Respondents from all the five regions admitted using words or language that can be considered inflammatory, derogatory or offensive towards other groups. This is most prevalent in the Northwest and the Centre regions where 21 respondents admitted using hate language. In the Far North and the Littoral regions 20 respondents admitted using hate speech closely followed by Southwest Region where 18 respondents equally admitted using hate speech. Very small number in both regions sampled either did not admit using hate words or did not know whether they used such words on individuals or groups other than their own.

Analysing this result across the selected five regions of the country, it can be deduced that hate speech is very prevalent across Cameroon. From the data presented above, more than 54.8% of the respondents across the various regions admitted to using hate speech.

### How does Hate Speech lead to Violent Conflict in Cameroon?

While covering a wide range of hate speech terms and speaking to respondents on the process involved, we found out 3 key terms; Derogatory, inflammatory and offensive in the process of hate speech leading to violent conflict.

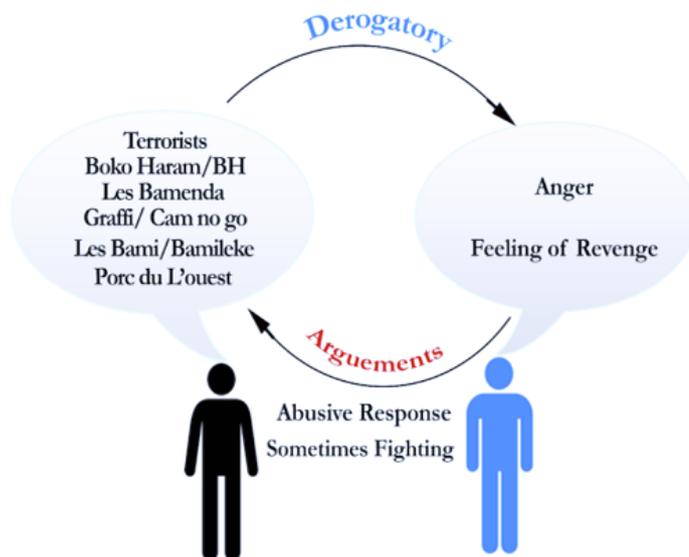


Figure 1: Outcome of a Derogatory Hate Speech

To understand this perfectly, we sampled examples of expressions used online and offline in Cameroon and presented the reactions of respondents to these terms. The sketches below illustrate how damaging the identified hate words can be on an individual or groups.

In Cameroon, acts of violence have been committed both online and offline and they have instigated a lot of physical violence in the space of 5 years. A lot of hate speech and propaganda have been disseminated online through numerous Facebook pages and twitter accounts as well as online and offline TV channels among many other online and offline platforms.

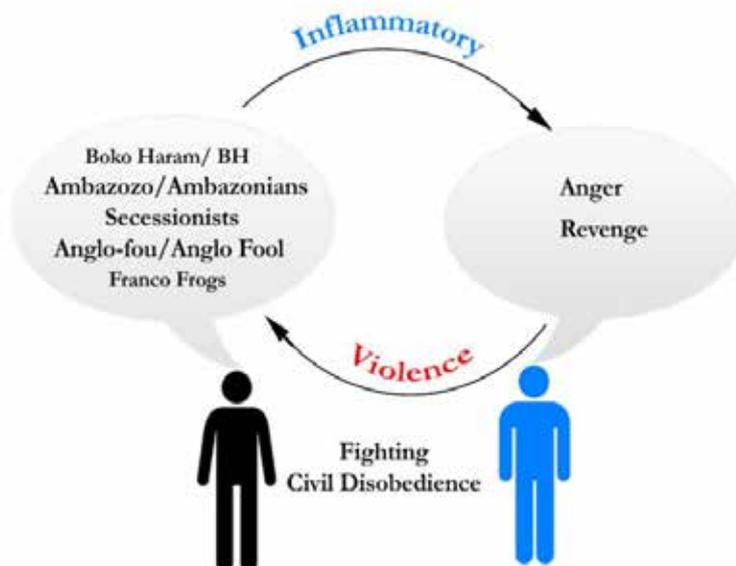


Figure 2: Outcome of an Inflammatory Hate Speech

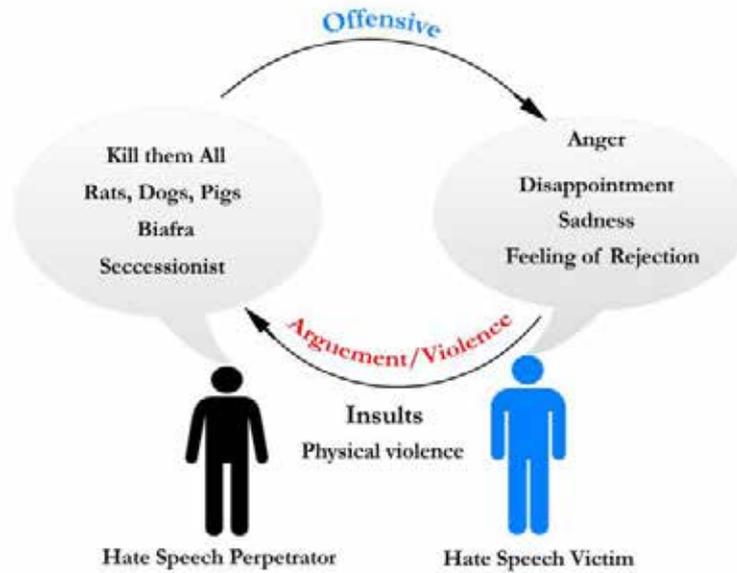
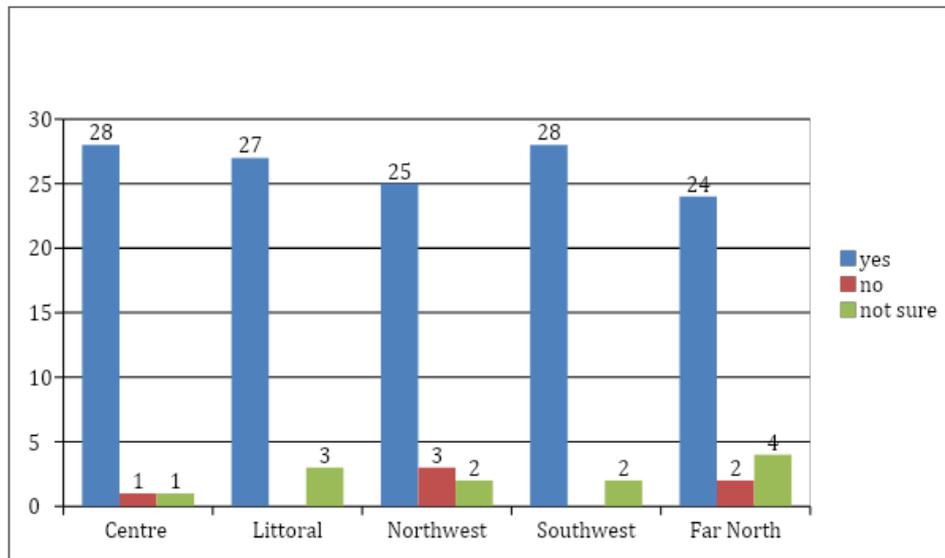


Figure 3: Outcome of an Offensive Hate Speech

As illustrated in figures 1, 2 and 3 above, radicalisation takes place when hate speech is used on an individual (victim/target) thus increasing the chances of a non-violent person to engage in an act of violence. To confirm this assertion, a survey was sampled to find out if nonviolent people can be instigated to commit violence through hate speech. See figure 9 below.

Figure 9: Can nonviolent people be incited to violence through hate speech?



Source: LOYOC Researchers' generated data, 2019

Respondents across the five regions sampled for the purpose of this research overwhelmingly agreed that hate speech has the potential to incite non-violent people to engage in violent activities. The evidence as depicted in figure 9 above therefore supports the assertion that if measures are not put in place to curb the rise of hate language in Cameroon, it could radicalise non-violent people and possibly make a peaceful resolution of violent conflicts difficult.



## LAWS & REGULATIONS ON HATE SPEECH IN CAMEROON

“The hate speech law passed on 24th Dec 2019, is an amendment of Law No. 2016/7 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code for hate speech.”

<https://www.prc.cm/en/multimedia/documents/8027-law-2019-020-of-24-december-2019>

SECTION 1: Law No. 2016/7 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code is hereby amended and supplemented as follows: “Section 241: (new) Contempt of race or religion

(1) Whoever commits a contempt, within the meaning of Section 152 of this Code, of the race or religion of one or many citizens or residents shall be punished with imprisonment for from 6 (six) months and with fine of from 5 000 (five thousand) francs to 500 000 (five hundred thousand) Francs.

(2) Where the offence is committed by means of the press or wireless, radio, television or social media or any other means likely to reach the public, the maximum of the fine provided for in subsection 1 above may extend to 20 000 000 (twenty million) Francs.

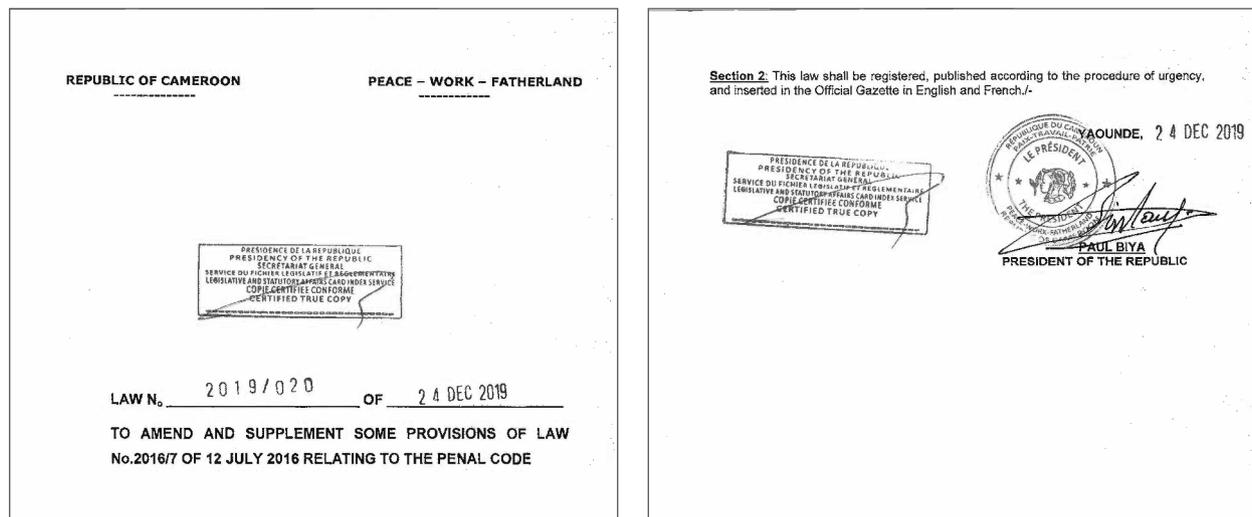
(3) Where the offence is committed with intent to arouse hatred or contempt between citizens, or residents, the penalties provided by the foregoing subsections shall be doubled.

SECTION 241-1: (new) contempt of Tribe or ethnique group

(1) Whoever, by any means, makes hate speech against people or incites them to violence due to their tribal or ethnique origin shall be punished with imprisonment of from 1 (one) to 2 (two) years and with fine of 300 000 (three hundred thousand) francs to 3 000 000 (three million) francs.

(2) Where the benefit of mitigating circumstances is given, the punishment provided for in Subsection 1 above shall not be less than 3 (three) months imprisonment and the fine shall not be less than 200 000 (two hundred thousand) francs. Execution shall not be suspended except in case of diminished responsibility of infancy.

(3) Where the author of the hate speech is a Public Servant as per the provisions of Section 131 of this Code, leader of a political party, of the media, of a Non-Governmental Organisation or a religious institution, the punishment provided for in subsection 1 above shall be doubled and the benefit of mitigating circumstances shall not be given.



## PEACEBUILDING AND HATE SPEECH POLICY IN CAMEROON

By Francine Nkolo

Peace is more than the absence of conflict and violence, it is also an important factor to build strong institutions. A peaceful environment is a prerequisite for a prosperous nation, and a necessity for the respect of human rights. That is why the United Nations includes peace and justice among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to achieve a better future for all. However there are many conflicts (religious, historical, socio-political, or ethnical...) that occur not between different countries, but inside a country, i.e. Pakistan, Rwanda, South Sudan and now Cameroon.

Cameroon is in Central Africa, it was once under German rule and after the Second World War was handed over to Britain and France as Mandated and Trust territories of the League of Nations and the UNO respectively. The country was divided in two parts (France: Northern Cameroon and the UK: Southern Cameroon). The two parts federated in 1961 and united in 1972. The English-speaking communities of North-and South-West Cameroon are feeling marginalised.

The Anglophone crisis began in Cameroon in October 2016 with corporatists' demands of lawyers and teachers of North-and South-West Regions, who wanted the effective translation and application of common law and work materials in English. Since the official languages of the Republic of Cameroon are English and French, both languages have the same status. Lacking peaceful communication between the protagonists (Public authorities, lawyers and teachers of these two Regions), along with the spread of hate speech on social media, these claims have transformed since 2017 into an armed conflict.

More than 437 000 people are currently displaced in Cameroon due to the conflict, more than 1800 persons have been killed in English-speaking regions of North-and South-West Cameroon and this number continues to increase. Due to this insecure situation, many Internally Displaced People (IDPs) have taken refuge in big cities like Yaoundé, Douala, and Bafoussam.

Platforms on social media allow a space where people in the country locally or those based in other countries interact by spreading hate speech and fake news on events in the North-and South-west Regions, in order to inflame the conflict. Public speeches broadcast called for the creation of the virtual republic of Ambazonia, whose virtual authorities are calling for secession, amplified by hate speech and violent manifestations videos (burning of Cameroonian flag, burning also schools, houses, hospitals.)

## Policy Addressing Hate Speech On Social Media

The same situation was seen in the northern part of Cameroon with the extremist Islamic group of Boko Haram, whose leader uses social media to spread violent videos in which people are killed. Demonstrating that social media networks are not a harmless tool in the hands of citizens. This drives us to ask the question: "How do policy and the laws in Cameroon affect the spread of hate speech on social media?"

According to the United Nations, "The term hate speech is understood as any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender or other identity factor. This is often rooted in, and generates intolerance and hatred and, in certain contexts, can be demeaning and divisive."

In Cameroon the spread of hate speech was increased by the political system of democratisation that was set up in the 90s. Indeed, the country has proceeded to a complete makeover of their legal instruments. Where freedom of expression and press is concerned, the law N° 90/046 of 19th December 1990 on social communication repealed the order N° 62/OF/18 of 12th March 1962 on the suppression of subversion. These laws had as a consequence the suppression of authorisation, meaning that they enable the suppression of censure and the end of the monopoly of the State on the audio-visual area. So, many private media and radio have emerged, with the aim to freely inform the public in all areas; giving citizens the opportunity to express themselves and openly criticise the government.

This freedom of expression in Cameroon reached its peak with the advent of internet and web influencers. This free communication of ideas has not always been bright for Cameroon, because the citizens do not know how to use their access to media responsibly and this leads to an increase of hate speech not only on traditional media, but also on social media platforms. Hence the need for Cameroon's public authorities to develop and implement public policies and legislation around controlling the spread of hate speech on social media.

In fact there are not yet institutional laws that specifically target hate speech on social media in Cameroon. The National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM) was created by the head of State His Excellency Paul BIYA in April 2017 to ensure that both English and French are used as official languages and with equal status as mentioned in the constitution, so that one community will not feel marginalised. It also works with other institutions like the national Council of communication (NCC), on sensitisation and education on freedom and responsibility of media; the promotion of peace, "living together", democracy and human rights; the promotion of national languages and cultures in all media.

The Ministry of Post and Telecommunication is struggling to sensitise on cyber criminality on media through a government organisation NAICT (National Agency of Information and Communication Technology). This Agency plays a crucial role in the regulation of the use of the internet. It restricted the free flow of information online.

It is for that purpose that the law N° 2010 /012 of 21st December 2010 was adopted in the Cameroonian parliament. It punishes offences related to the use of Information and communication technologies.

Recently (November 2019), a law project modifying and supplementing some dispositions of the law of 12th July 2016 (Article 241) on the penal code of Cameroon were submitted in the national parliament. This law suggests one to two years of imprisonment for those who spread hate speech and incite people to violence with the payment of a fine of 300.000 to 3 million francs CFA. If the perpetrators of the committed crimes are government employees, leaders of a political party, a media manager, NGO manager, or a religious institution, these sentences will be doubled.

However not all citizens are aware of the existence of all these laws, so many continue to incite violence on social media and spread hate speech online. (People are still posting and sharing videos where English-speaking Cameroonians are called "Dogs" on private classic media). Even those who are sensitised to the abuse of the non-repression of these laws since, nobody has yet been punished.

**To fight against hate speech, the following suggestions are proposed:**

- The Cameroonian Government needs to implement the law that already exists, for it to be effective and efficient
- Civil society and NGOs need to work with the Cameroonian government to let them know the relevance of having a specific law on hate speech
- The Cameroonian Government needs to create an independent follow up on the domain of hate speech on social media;
- The communities need to be sensitised and educated on responsible use of social media to be sure they understand all the risks that can affect people
- The Cameroonian Government needs to target words that are considered as hateful and vicious in Cameroonian context, i.e. “Anglophone”, “frog”, “Bamenda”, “Bamileké”...
- The law based hate speech discussed in parliament needs to be adopted;
- A strategy is needed to resettle and re-empower the IDPs

Ultimately, Cameroon is a complicated country with all its cultural specificities. But these are not to be considered as a source of conflict among the population. The status of bilingualism in Cameroon needs to play positively in the peacebuilding efforts, as the two official languages should effectively be used in equal manner everywhere by every Cameroonian. In this country of about 25 million inhabitants, where more than one million are using social media<sup>8</sup>, it is clearly difficult for public authorities to have effective control on what is posted by people on social media platforms. It is one this way that fake news, hate speech and violent videos which contribute to intensify conflicts are spreading. The Government has a key role to play in setting up a real policy and legislation about hate speech on social media, but also to have a real follow-up. However, legislation is only one approach – that can also be misused against people – and needs to be supported by civil society engagement, critical awareness and education on responsible use of social media.

Keywords: **Peacebuilding - Hate speech - Social media - Cameroon - IDPs.**



# 2

## Peacebuilding & Social Media



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UNESCO PEACE AMBASSADORS FOR #HATEFREECAMEROON

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## #DEFYHATENOW | CHAPTER 2

# PEACEBUILDING & SOCIAL MEDIA



## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

How can social media be used for peacebuilding?

What are digital and human rights?

Why does online freedom of expression matter?



## PEACE IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

**By Fadia Elgharib**

When we think about peace in the age of social media, it is important to note how much an ordinary citizen can do and the power s/he holds to change the course of a conflict.

You can stand against oppression, assist in humanitarian rescue operations at the time of crisis and contribute to major upheavals (i.e Arab Spring) simply by using your smartphone. All this can be done with a great deal of autonomy and little need for mediators. In this respect, peace is not only a topic for government officials to discuss in parliament or high level NGOs at round tables.

Peace is the responsibility of every one of us, both in our capacities as individuals or as part of communities. This realisation compels us to revisit our role as bloggers, educators, or citizens etc in maintaining and making peace in this growingly complex global picture. Social media is only a tool that has proved influential in both the making and the disruption of peace, therefore it is our responsibility to use it wisely.

While the term peacebuilding is used in a variety of scenarios, we need to take a moment to re-examine the meaning of the word “peace”, and how this relates to the context of #defyhatenow.

### **Online And Offline Peacemaking**

While it is hard to pinpoint the exact impact of the messages and stories written online onto the world offline, examples discussed in the Field Guide demonstrate how traditional and digital media have played

a role in igniting violence and conflict in different parts of the world. Note that the online world also serves to amplify and expand the reach of existing tensions offline.

By the same logic, the online space - whether social media, blogs or other forms of media - also has the capacity to influence social change in the opposite direction, towards peacemaking. As digital tools help you to easily connect with a global community, occupying this space with cultural activities, storytelling and messages of peace can harness energy and movement for social change.

Online activism strengthens offline advocacy, events and civil society engagement.

### Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

The word “peace” is associated with the context of war; and is widely understood to mean mainly the absence of war, or the maintenance of a state of no conflict. What this view of peace fails to capture are other equally important aspects of social cohesion that are vital to peacebuilding.

**“Related to peace are the concepts of peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Peacekeeping is defined as ‘the maintenance of peace, especially the prevention of further fighting between hostile forces in an area.’**

(Collins, 2003).

Peacebuilding, on the other hand, is a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships (Lederach, 1997).

The term involves a wide range of activities that both precede and follow formal peace accords. Galtung (1998) explains peacebuilding as the process of creating self-supporting structures that remove causes of wars and offer alternatives in war-like situations. Such mechanisms should be built into the structures of society and be present there as a reservoir for the system itself to draw upon, just as a healthy body has the ability to generate its own antibodies and does not need ad hoc administration of medicine (Galtung, 1998; Lynch & Galtung, 2010 p6.)

**“Peace can never be achieved but only approached, or so it is argued.”**

Peace is worth pursuing because “peace allows for people to live with conflict and in its non-violent response to conflicts, peace finds alternatives to “bloody routes.”

These ‘alternative routes’ may include: society’s non-violent response to conflict, in particular through mediation and dialogue; building empathy and tolerance for different groups in society; strengthening the connections of trust and understanding between communities to build and maintain networks of communication that enable self-sustaining peace throughout society.



## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND HATE SPEECH LAWS

“

Human rights groups note that there is reason to be concerned about the implementation of hate speech laws, which can be used to silence criticism of those in power by citizens, and curtail freedom of expression by journalists and activists.

”

**Freedom on the Net 2019: The Crisis of Social Media**<https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-net>

Adrian Shahbaz &amp; Allie Funk, Freedom House

Internet freedom is increasingly imperiled by the tools and tactics of digital authoritarianism, which have spread rapidly around the globe. Repressive regimes, elected incumbents with authoritarian ambitions, and unscrupulous partisan operatives have exploited the unregulated spaces of social media platforms, converting them into instruments for political distortion and societal control.

“While social media have at times served as a level playing field for civic discussion, they are now tilting dangerously toward illiberalism, exposing citizens to an unprecedented crackdown on their fundamental freedoms”

Social media allow ordinary people, civic groups, and journalists to reach a vast audience at little or no cost, but they have also provided an extremely useful and inexpensive platform for malign influence operations by foreign and domestic actors alike. In many countries, the rise of populism and far-right extremism has coincided with the growth of hyperpartisan online mobs that include both authentic users and fraudulent or automated accounts. They build large audiences around similar interests, lace their political messaging with false or inflammatory content, and coordinate its dissemination across multiple platforms.

**ARTICLE 19: Global Freedom of Expression**<https://www.article19.org/resources/global-expression-report-2018-19-global-freedom-of-expression-at-a-ten-year-low/>

“

A rise in digital authoritarianism sees governments taking control of internet infrastructure, increasing online surveillance, using digital technology to surveill their citizens, restrict content and shut down communications.

”

The Global Expression Report 2018-19 shows that global freedom of expression is at its lowest for a decade. “Almost ten years ago, the Arab Spring offered hope to people across the world that repressive governments would not be able to retain power when faced with protestors, empowered as never before with access to information and digital tools for organising. Today, protests continue to take place around the world but our report shows that global freedom of expression remains at a ten-year low and that many of the gains made in the earlier part of the decade have been lost.”

**Digital authoritarianism is on the rise**

Digital freedom of expression is lower than it was 10 years ago in every region except the Middle East and North Africa. This is largely due to a rise in digital authoritarianism with governments increasingly undermining freedom of expression online through: internet shutdowns; content restrictions; weakening encryption; increased surveillance; banning secure messaging apps; and data localisation.

“Journalists, communicators and human rights defenders are still being imprisoned, attacked and killed with impunity. But we are also seeing a rise in digital authoritarianism where governments are using digital technology to surveill their citizens, restrict content and shut down communications. Governments need to take action to reverse this trend and uphold their citizens’ right to freedom of expression.” Thomas Hughes, Executive Director of ARTICLE 19



## SILENCING DISSENT AND CRITICISM BY CRIMINALISING FREE SPEECH

The systematic use of criminal law to prosecute and punish critics has become a trend in different countries. This includes the introduction of provisions in laws that require individuals to declare their sources of information, such as in Cameroon.

### Enforcing Insult Laws

One of the emerging methods has been the use of 'insult' laws. In December 2014, outspoken Kenyan blogger Robert Alai was arrested and charged under section 132 of the Penal Code<sup>80</sup> for undermining the authority of a public officer because of remarks he had made on social media concerning President Uhuru Kenyatta. He posted the statement "Insulting Raila is what Uhuru can do. He hasn't realised the value of the Presidency. Adolescent President. This seat needs Maturity" which authorities found were calculated to bring into contempt the lawful authority of the President. Alai made a constitutional challenge to the arrest and argued that the provision was vague, uncertain and an unjustifiable limitation to freedom of expression, as well as violating basic criminal law principles. The High Court in April 2017 found the provision invalid and declared that its continued enforcement was unconstitutional and a violation of the fundamental right to freedom of expression.

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) have since July 2014, reported to have provided legal aid to more than 200 people arrested for posts made on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. The charges have mainly related to the 'insult law'. In November 2017, Martha O'Donovan, an American working in Zimbabwe was arrested for calling former President Robert Mugabe a "sick and selfish man" on Twitter.

Uganda's Computer Misuse Act 11, which criminalised cyber harassment (section 24) and "offensive communication under section 25, has been used to arrest and charge government critics. On August 1, 2019, Ugandan Dr. Stella Nyanzi, an academic and human rights activist, was convicted for cyber harassment (and acquitted of offensive communication) against president Yoweri Museveni under sections 24 (1) and (2)(a) of the Computer MisUse Act 2011.

### Uganda Computer MisUse Act <https://ulii.org/ug/legislation/act/2015/2-6>

Nyanzi's use of metaphorically worded poetry which has often criticized Museveni's reign over Uganda were used against her in court. Nyanzi was arrested in November 2018 for publishing a poem in which she referred to Museveni's existence, his mother and the deterioration of public institutions during his leadership.

Source: **State of Internet Freedom in Africa 2019**  
**Mapping Trends in Government Internet Controls, 1999-2019**  
Published by CIPESA, [www.cipesa.org](http://www.cipesa.org) September 2019



## CASE STUDY: DR STELLA NYANZI, UGANDA

Amnesty International calls for the Computer Misuse Act to be scrapped because it “has been used systematically to harass, intimidate and stifle government critics”.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/08/uganda-freedom-of-expression-takes-a-knock-as-stella-nyanzi-found-guilty-of-cyber-harassment/>

“Stella Nyanzi has been criminalized solely for her creative flair of using metaphors and what may be considered insulting language to criticize President Museveni’s leadership. The mere fact that forms of expression are considered insulting to a public figure is not sufficient ground to penalize anyone. Public officials, including those exercising the highest political authority, are legitimately subject to criticism and political opposition.” Joan Nyanyuki, Amnesty International’s Director for East Africa, the Horn and the Great Lakes

### **‘You can’t handcuff my spirit’: jailed writer wins freedom of expression prize**

Alice McCool, Kampala @McCoolingtons

The Guardian Global Development, January 2020

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/jan/17/jailed-ugandan-activist-stella-nyanzi-wins-freedom-of-expression-award-oxfam-pen-international>

In January 2020, Dr Stella Nyanzi was awarded the Oxfam Novib/PEN International award for freedom of expression, while still imprisoned.

The Ugandan academic, writer and feminist activist Dr Stella Nyanzi has been in Luzira women’s prison in Kampala, the capital, for nearly 15 months after writing a poem about President Yoweri Museveni’s mother’s vagina. The poem uses the metaphor of her vagina and Museveni’s birth to criticise his near 35-year rule.

“Writing is a permanent form of resistance in front of a regime that is trying to suppress her,” said Carles Torner, director of PEN International.

Nyanzi recounted using handcuffs while in solitary confinement to scratch words into the prison walls, including: “You can handcuff my body but you can never handcuff my spirit – Stella Nyanzi.”

In 2017, she spent 33 days in prison for a Facebook post in which she described Museveni as a “pair of buttocks.” Jennifer Clement, PEN International president, said of Nyanzi: “Though her words might be colourful and shocking to some, this is not enough to justify the imposition of penalties, and public officials should tolerate a higher degree of criticism than ordinary citizens.”

In an acceptance speech smuggled out of prison, Nyanzi wrote: “Unlawful laws are used in unjust courts to punish citizens whose only crime is exercising their constitutional freedom to write boldly about the dictatorship.” She added: “My custodial sentence in a maximum security prison highlights how fearful this dictator and his cronies are of writers. Isn’t the pen, indeed, mightier than the sword?”



## DIGITAL RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS



### Challenges to Digital Rights

- Digital authoritarianism - surveillance, internet shutdowns, censorship
- Social networks offering 'free internet' owned by private corporations
- Attacks on freedom of the press, harassment of journalists & citizens
- Safety for women and girls online, cyberbullying & sexual harassment
- Corporate and government misuse of our data, metadata and privacy.

### Human Rights in the digital space

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been a cornerstone of the human rights movement, guiding us toward the universal realization of equality, justice, and respect for human dignity. But for many of us, that promise has not been fulfilled.

Our shared human rights framework is continuously adapting to our changing society. There is growing recognition that our rights must be protected in digital spaces, and that access to the internet is vital to exercising all other rights, from free expression to the right to work to education.

But despite its many successes, this framework, with the Declaration at its core, has also struggled to respond to the real-world challenges of this digital era. Across the globe, technology that holds promise for supporting human rights is instead being wielded by authoritarian governments for exploitation and abuse. What can we do to ensure a better, more rights-respecting future?

“

In this era of digital disruption, what are the most important challenges and opportunities for defending human rights, now and on the horizon?

”

In envisioning human rights protections for the digital age, we must ask, what does our right to privacy mean in an era of ubiquitous data collection? How do we enjoy freedom of expression when shared online spaces are controlled by private platforms? What does access to information mean for those trapped behind a firewall? What of our right to non-discrimination in the age of the algorithm?

And as our ability to exercise and enjoy our rights comes to depend on digital tools, what happens to those who have not yet been connected to the internet, or who are forcibly disconnected?

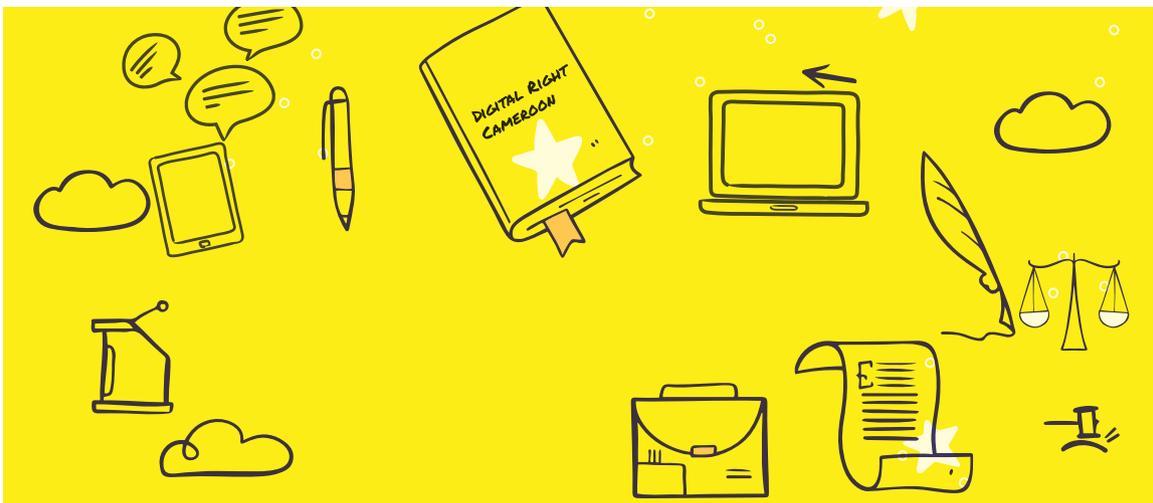
**Excerpt from Access Now.**

Brett Solomon@solomonbrett

<https://www.accessnow.org/un-human-rights-digital-disruption/>



## STATE OF DIGITAL RIGHTS IN CAMEROON



<https://defyhatenow.org/the-state-of-digital-rights-in-cameroon-2/>

There have been incidents that might initiate the need for a digital rights law in Cameroon. For instance, the English Regions of Cameroon hit by the ongoing crisis have witnessed 2 internet disruptions which the government has blamed on the rising tension, fake news, incitement to violence, and propaganda preached by Cameroonians at home and in the Diaspora. The internet disruptions which lasted over 90 days and cost the state millions were widely condemned by the international community as a gross violation of the digital/human rights of internet users. As a case in point, this in part shows the state of digital rights in Cameroon.

Digital Rights Activists in Cameroon have been working towards advocacy plans for a Digital Rights bill for Cameroon which if implemented, would ensure that the digital rights of Cameroonians are protected. Do you think that there is a pressing need for a digital rights bill in Cameroon?



## INTERNET SHUTDOWNS IN CAMEROON

Internet outage in Cameroon: between complaints and loss of customers.

Since January 19, 2020, many Cameroonian Internet users have complained about the bad or lack of

connection in most cities of the country.

For many Cameroonian women like Savana, “I had to turn off my phone several times thinking that it was my phone that had a problem. It was by asking my loved ones if they were in the same situation as me, that I realized that it came from the operator.”

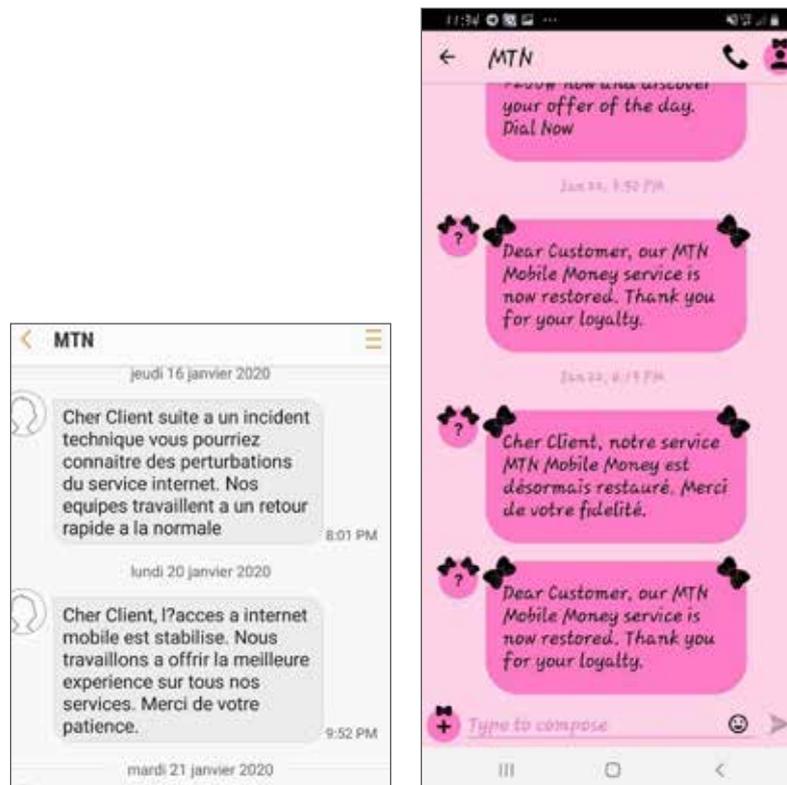
Indeed, the lack of access to emails, to pages on social networks has created total panic on the web as these screenshots of publications indicate.



Whether Nexxtel, Camtel, Mtn or Orange, the subscribers of these companies have had restricted access and a disruption in their network, especially challenging for those whose work relies on the Internet.

Gabin is a Community Manager who suffered: “I could not publish on the various pages that I manage because of this disturbance. I had to make posts without Image or video to respect my publication schedule.” In this uncertain situation, everyone finds and publishes their own explanations.

On the economic aspect, victims have also been recorded. In recent years, the Mobile Money service has become part of daily life for many Cameroonians who depend on mobile access for financial transactions. Even the Mobile Money service has been disrupted. It was impossible to make money transfers and purchases, resulting in a real shortfall for traders with regard to their goods.



On January 22, 2020, some operators announced restored service. Despite these guarantees, subscribers still complain that they do not have access to their accounts and that it is necessary to refresh the page several times to succeed in this step. Doubt persists because by reading the messages above, customers are divided as to the meaning of the words: does Stabilize mean Restore?

For the moment, no official press release has been published to shed light on this case. We hope that everything will return to normal soon.



## WHAT DOES “DIGITAL RIGHTS” MEAN?

Most definitions focus on the relationships between human beings, computers, networks and devices. Some focus on the issue of copyright exclusively.

As our lives are digitalised further, do these approaches and definitions make sense? Our data are being collected by governments and corporations alike. In all of these contexts, our basic human rights – our rights to freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, privacy, and the like – are implicated. If there ever was a line between “digital” rights and human rights, it has blurred to the point of irrelevance.

We consider digital rights to be human rights as applicable in the digital sphere. Human rights in both physically constructed spaces: infrastructure and devices, and in spaces that are virtually constructed, like our online identities and communities.

If digital rights are human rights, then why use a different term? The label “digital rights” merely serves to pinpoint the sphere in which we are exercising our fundamental rights and freedoms. With our digital rights under threat on many fronts, this is important.

Just as it was important, in 1995, for Hillary Clinton to state at the Women's Congress in Beijing that "human rights are women's rights, and women's rights are human rights," and for President Obama in 2016 to stress that LGBT rights are human rights, we should all be aware that digital rights are human rights, too. And they need to be protected.

Source: **IntLawGrrls**

<https://ilg2.org/2019/02/27/digital-rights-are-all-human-rights-not-just-civil-and-political/>



## CAMEROON LGBTQI RIGHTS

Cameroon's first Penal Code, enacted in 1965, did not criminalise consensual same-sex sexual acts. An Ordinance issued in September 1972 by President Ahmadou Ahidjo introduced Article 347bis (now 347-1). This amendment took place a few months after the advent of the unitary State under the new Constitution, when the National Assembly had not yet been elected.<sup>1</sup>

The Law on Cybersecurity and Cybercrime (Law No. 2010/012 of 21 December 2010) criminalises online same-sex sexual propositions. 1 Under Article 83(1) any person who makes sexual propositions to a person of their sex through electronic communications shall be punished with imprisonment of one to two years and a fine of 500,000 to 1,000,000 CFA francs or only one of these two penalties. Under Article 83(2) it is established that the penalties are doubled when the proposals have been followed by sexual intercourse.<sup>2</sup>

### **Discrimination and harassment**

*Refugee Legal Aid Information, Cameroon*

Discrimination and harassment are omnipresent threats for LGBTI Cameroonians. They are at risk of imprisonment and extortion by law enforcement officials. Some gay men have even been entrapped by neighbors or acquaintances conspiring to report them, which creates a climate of distrust and fear. Many LGBTI Cameroonians believe the only way to protect themselves is to hide their sexuality especially since the 2005 arrests when the media began to portray being gay or lesbian as a menace to public safety.

A spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) said in a November 2012 press release that "while the penal code relates specifically to sexual conduct, we are seriously concerned that it is being applied in a broad-brush way to prosecute many individuals on the basis of their appearance, their mannerisms, style of speech or general conduct" (16 Nov. 2012). According to Human Rights Watch, "Cameroon's anti-homosexuality law is easily subject to abuse, and can be used by virtually anyone as a method of settling scores" (Mar. 2013, 2).

Cameroon's laws deny LGBT people access to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The criminalization of consensual same-sex conduct under article 347(1) of the Penal Code, which punishes "sexual relations with a person of the same sex" with up to five years in prison, infringes on the right to health of people who are sexual and gender minorities. Laws criminalizing same-sex intimacy pose barriers to HIV prevention, care, and treatment services.<sup>1</sup>

Cameroonian human rights organizations documented the arrest of at least 25 men and at least two women on homosexuality charges in the first half of 2018. They also reported numerous cases of physical violence by private citizens targeting LGBT people.<sup>2</sup>

Sources:

**Refugee Legal Aid Information: Cameroon LGBTI Resources**

<http://www.refugelegalaidinformation.org/cameroon-lgbti-resources>

**UNHCR Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada**

<https://www.refworld.org/docid/537336864.html>



combating hate speech. However, respondents in the Northwest region want the Forces of law and order such as the police, military and courts to play the lead role in preventing the dominance of hate speech in the country. Conclusively the above data highlights that young people are averagely the principal stakeholders in combating hate speech. A respondent claims that “Young people make up 70% of the country’s population, they suffer the most as victims, thus they are rightfully placed to mobilise their peers, collaborate with other stakeholders to end hate speech in Cameroon.”

### Role Of Youth Countering Hate Speech In Cameroon

The role of young people in building peace cannot be overemphasised. The adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 on youth peace and security and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2419 on youth and peace process only come to legitimise the amazing efforts young people have made in building peace.



In Cameroon, with the rise of violence and insecurity, Young Cameroonians though victims of the outcomes of these conflicts have demonstrated resilience in preventing violence and building peace. Through Social groupings, young Cameroonians have mobilised themselves to build their capacity and put up a collaborative voice to end the drivers of violence across the country, of which hate speech has been their main target.

In response to this, our organisation; Local Youth Corner Cameroon designed the Spread Love Campaign which provides young people from different walks of life including celebrities to become Ambassadors with the capacity of designing and implementing initiatives to prevent, counter and provide alternatives and new narratives to hate speech. The edition of this initiative trained 30 Spread Love Ambassadors, supported the creation of 30 Spread Love Clubs in secondary and primary Schools, developed music, arts, slam, radio, television and social media contents which has been used to sensitise over 500000 people across the country.

According to the findings, the State has the primary responsibility to protect populations and prevent the spread of hate speech; however, many other actors can play an important role.



## EXERCISE: DISCUSS HATE SPEECH ONLINE AND IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Who are the targets of hate speech?

What effect does it have on society in general?

How can we counter online hate speech?

- How might hate speech affect the people who are targeted?
- What consequences might these examples of hate speech have on people identifying with the communities targeted?

- How does listening to hate speech or dangerous speech on the radio, in person or online make you feel?
- What could you do to stop the spread of hate speech in your own community, your family or school?



## DESIGN A SOCIAL MEDIA PEACE CAMPAIGN



<https://defyhatenow.org/design-a-social-media-peace-campaign/>

SEE EXERCISE IN FACILITATOR GUIDE



#HateFreeCameroon Photo Board

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y2rVxDnLIC-eZr7eV0S3Duu\\_DQXvSFH/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y2rVxDnLIC-eZr7eV0S3Duu_DQXvSFH/view?usp=sharing)

#HateFreeCameroon STICKER

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/11YqHMBjAbMqyzSfxccera2\\_ENQ5DERGw/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11YqHMBjAbMqyzSfxccera2_ENQ5DERGw/view?usp=sharing)



## CASE STUDY: FLOWER SPEECH CAMPAIGN

<https://beautifulrising.org/tool/flower-speech-campaign>

In 2014, the Panzagar #FlowerSpeech campaign was launched to counter hate speech in Myanmar in response to a rise in anti-Muslim violence. Flowers, the key image of the campaign, symbolise peace in Myanmar. The campaign effectively countered hate speech among Buddhist extremists by invoking the Buddhist code of ethical conduct – the tenet of “right speech”, or avoiding abusive, divisive or harmful speech (**PRINCIPLE: Know your community**).

Holding a traditional flower in your mouth to symbolise the foundational Buddhist tenet of ethical conduct made the message familiar and accessible and compelling to its target audience, as well as across other cultures. By combining an active presence on social media with public events, music and stickers, the campaign makes it very easy for people to participate (**PRINCIPLE: Create many points of entry**), and for passive supporters to become actively involved (**METHODOLOGY: Spectrum-of-allies analysis**).

Finally, by condensing the campaign message into a simple, powerful, and culturally resonant image, the campaign ensured that its message would be clearly and immediately understood by everyone who saw it (**THEORY: Memes**). Panzagar was not a solution for all hate crimes, but rather a way to equip supporters with an easy way to respond to, and defuse, hate speech when they encountered it.

“Our slogan is to be careful, not to be silent,” said Nay Phone Latt, a blogger and activist who has spearheaded the Panzagar campaign. “We just got freedom of expression, and we don’t want to be silenced.”

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/religion/using-flower-speech-and-new-facebook-tools-myanmar-fights-online-hate-speech/2014/12/24/3bff458c-8ba9-11e4-ace9-47de1af4c3eb\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/religion/using-flower-speech-and-new-facebook-tools-myanmar-fights-online-hate-speech/2014/12/24/3bff458c-8ba9-11e4-ace9-47de1af4c3eb_story.html)



## UNESCO PEACE AMBASSADORS FOR HATE FREE CAMEROON

On December 05, 2019, the esplanade of the Omnisport stadium in Yaoundé welcomed young people who came to discover what it is to be a Peace Ambassador.

An initiative of UNESCO Cameroon and r0g\_agency Berlin, the role of Ambassadors of Peace in Cameroon was the main attraction for two days of discussion. Mr.Ndih Hugue from UNESCO showed participants examples of how different everyday situations can create conflict and how to resolve it with others peacefully.

Mr. Desmond Ngala, coordinator of the #DefyHateNow initiative in Cameroon talked with these young people about their use of social networks. Nearly a hundred young people shared their choices and experiences of social networks. Many are on social media first to keep links with their friends and family, others wanted to do like others.

Their general view was: “Social networks have given a kind of freedom to their users who for the most part, have found a way to say what they feel, and for the more shy, they allowed them to break with their shyness and become open to others.”

For Benjamin, one of the participants “if the hate continues, the first guilty is the Cameroonian State which does not regulate the use of social media in the country.” Rebecca takes a different view, saying “It’s

cowards who make hate statements on social networks because in real life, they cannot do it.”

The public shared various experiences with hate speech, tribalism, insults to launch a warning cry “it’s time to do something - that is too much!” Ms. Salamatou Blanche shared questions to ask ourselves once we receive information on social networks.

These tips are available on the #ThinkB4UClick campaign guide. The workshop groups were asked to bring outline five key aspects of the Peace Ambassador online.

### **Guidelines you can adopt to become a Peace Ambassador on social media.**

- I will always check information before disclosing it
- I will only make unifying speeches
- I will think before clicking
- I will analyse before posting
- I will be responsible for my actions



# 3

## Social Media Literacy



## 03 SOCIAL MEDIA LITERACY

### CONTENTS

Hate Speech Vs Dangerous Speech

VIDEO: What is Dangerous Speech?

Dangerous Speech: A Practical Guide

Digital Media Literacy

Understanding Information Disorder

First Draft News: Verification Toolbox

Verifying Online Information

VIDEO: Verification Training

Questions For Group Discussion

#Factsmatter237 Training

Media & Social Media Disinformation

#Factsmatter237 Exercise

Misinformation, Manipulated & False Content

ONLINE MODULE: #Factsmatters237 Fellowship Report

NEXT STEPS: #Act4peace237

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#DEFYHATENOW | CHAPTER 3

# SOCIAL MEDIA LITERACY

?

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What is Dangerous Speech vs Hate Speech?

Why does digital media literacy matter?

How can we stop disinformation?

⚡

## HATE SPEECH VS DANGEROUS SPEECH

“ Dangerous Speech is any form of expression (e.g. speech, text, or images) that can increase the risk that its audience will condone or commit violence against members of another group. ”

📄

## DANGEROUS SPEECH: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

by Susan Benesch, Cathy Buerger, Tonei Glavinic, and Sean Manion December, 2018  
<https://dangerousspeech.org/guide/>

### When does hate speech become dangerous speech?

Dangerous speech is communication that may help catalyze mass violence by moving an audience to condone, or even take part in, such violence.



Image: Peter Durand CC-BY-SA

Importantly, the definition refers to increasing the risk of violence, not causing it. In the definition of Dangerous Speech, violence means direct physical (or bodily) harm inflicted on people, not other forms of harm such as doxing, incitement to self-harm, discrimination, or social exclusion. These other forms of harm are important, of course, and Dangerous Speech may inspire people to inflict many forms of harm. In our definition we focus on physical violence since it is easier to measure, and there is greater consensus on what constitutes physical violence.

Also, the definition mentions both committing and condoning violence. The reason for this is that even in the most large-scale violence between people, only a small proportion (usually young men) actually carry out violence. People close to them, however – e.g. siblings, friends, and teachers – often condone or even encourage it. Generally, when a society suffers major intergroup violence, a few commit it and a much larger number condone it.

“Inflammatory public speech rises steadily before outbreaks of mass violence, suggesting that it is a precursor or even a prerequisite for violence. In most cases, a few influential speakers gradually incite a group to violence. Violence may be prevented, then, by interfering with this process in any of several ways: inhibiting the speech, limiting its dissemination, undermining the credibility of the speaker, or ‘inoculating’ the audience against the speech so that it is less influential, or dangerous.”

In general, the Dangerous Speech that comes just before violence breaks out is easiest to identify since its meaning tends to be clear and it often calls for, or at least endorses, violence. Years or months earlier, speech is often expressed in ambiguous, coded language, so that both its meaning and its impact are less apparent. This doesn’t mean that it can be safely disregarded.

Because the social, historical, and cultural context in which speech was made or disseminated is essential for understanding its possible impact, this analysis must be carried out with extensive knowledge of the relevant language, culture, and social conditions – or at least with assistance from advisors who have such knowledge.





## DIGITAL MEDIA LITERACY

Media and information literacy is crucial to navigate Social Media with an informed perspective. The following guides and handbooks are published by First Draft News, UNESCO and Twitter. They offer practical tools and skills to navigate global media and dismantle the disinformation matrix with critically aware readers and journalists.

First Draft is the gold standard of training for verification tools and skills, not only for journalists but also to inform critically engaged citizen readership who can help stop the spread of disinformation. A global, non-profit, non-partisan organisation that exists to help those on the frontline of reporting, First Draft provides practical guidance and training informed by ongoing research. Skills, tools and strategies are continuously tested and revised with partners around the world.

### Essential Guides: Understanding Information Disorder

We live in an age of information disorder. The promise of the digital age encouraged us to believe that only positive changes would come, living in hyper-connected communities able to access any information we needed with a click or a swipe. But this idealised vision has been swiftly replaced by the recognition that our information ecosystem is now dangerously polluted and is dividing rather than connecting us.

To help map this new landscape, First Draft explain our framework of 7 types of mis- and disinformation in detail in our Essential Guide to Understanding Information Disorder. Examples underline how damaging information disorder has been in the context of elections and breaking-news events around the world.

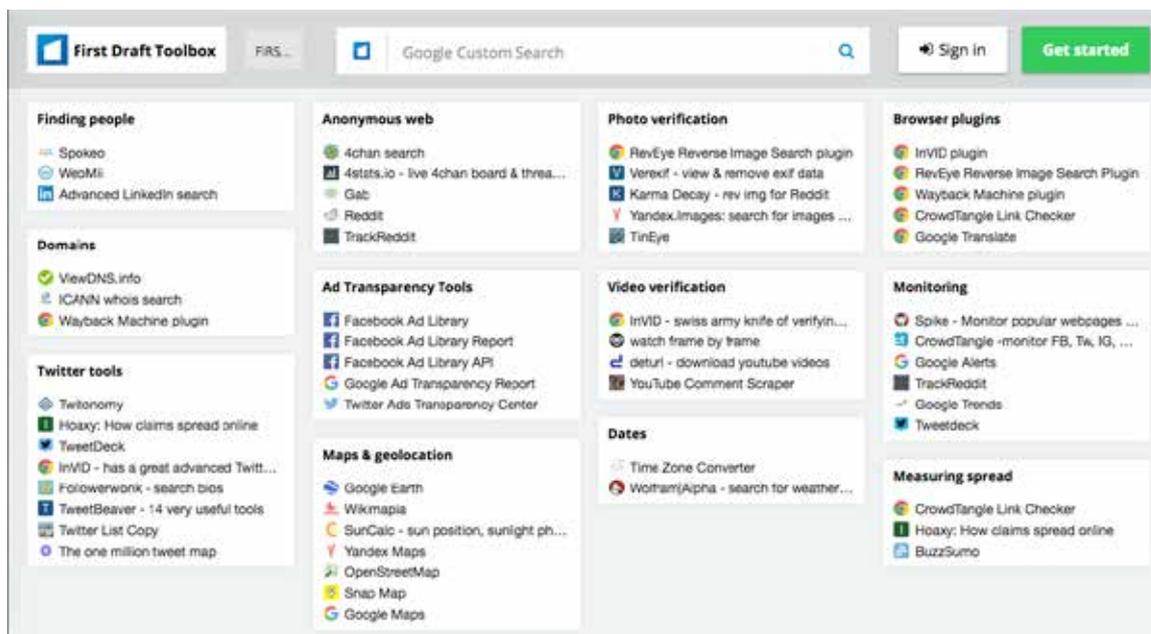
Source:

**First Draft News Understanding Information Disorder (PDF) 2019**

[https://firstdraftnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Information\\_Disorder\\_Digital\\_AW.pdf?x32994](https://firstdraftnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Information_Disorder_Digital_AW.pdf?x32994)

**First Draft Toolbox**

<https://start.me/p/YazB12/first-draft-toolbox>



First Draft News Verification Toolbox (screenshot)

VISUAL VERIFICATION GUIDE: PHOTOS

	NO			YES	
<b>1. ARE YOU LOOKING AT THE ORIGINAL VERSION?</b>	A reverse image search returns identical photos indexed online before the event in question took place	A reverse image search returns similar results with some identical features, suggesting it might be a composite	A date search on each social network reveals it to be the first of many versions shared online but we have not yet received confirmation from the uploader	We are unable to find other versions online and basic shadow and reflection checks suggest that it has not been manipulated	It was sent to us directly and we have spoken to the source
<b>2. DO YOU KNOW WHO CAPTURED THE PHOTO?</b>	It came in via an anonymous email or chat app number	It was uploaded to a social network but the username does not appear elsewhere online. The uploader wants to remain anonymous	By running full name searches, reverse searching the user's profile photo, and/or researching the domain ownership of their blog or website, we were able to identify the uploader	We communicated with the uploader via social media to confirm that they took the photo	We questioned the source and their answers correlated with EXIF data, weather reports and their own online footprint
<b>3. DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE PHOTO WAS CAPTURED?</b>	There was no location data available and it contains no visual clues to investigate	We have cross-referenced with other photos coming from the scene but there is no satellite or street view imagery available to confirm the location	We have used visual clues such as signage, architecture and clothing to establish a broad geographical region	We have crossreferenced landscape and landmarks using mapping tools and have confirmed the lat/long coordinates	The source was able to confirm other landmarks in their field of vision, which matched those shown on online maps
<b>4. DO YOU KNOW WHEN THE PHOTO WAS CAPTURED?</b>	It was sent to us anonymously and there is no EXIF data available	We checked the timestamp on the social network to see when it was first shared online but we have no EXIF data confirming when it was taken	The social time stamp shows it was uploaded shortly after the event occurred and it features visual evidence that correlates with other eyewitness reports	We confirmed that the weather conditions and any shadows visible in the image correlate with the time, date and location given by the source	It contains EXIF data that, combined with other checks, confirms when it was taken
<b>5. DO YOU KNOW WHY THE PHOTO WAS CAPTURED?</b>	We do not know who took the photo so we can't ascertain what their motivations might have been	The social media account was created very recently and/or social searches reveal the uploader rarely posts online so there is little evidence to confirm their movements or motivations	Wider online searches of the uploader's real name reveals that they are connected with an activist or advocacy organisation but there is no additional information to know their motivation in this case	Searches of the uploader's social media activity leading up to the event confirm their reasons for capturing the photo, i.e. holiday-maker, journalist, works locally	The photographer confirmed the circumstances surrounding the photo

First Draft News Visual Verification Guide

### Essential Guide: Verifying Online Information

Verification of online content can be intimidating, but it is not difficult.

Being good at verification is mostly about repetition, persistence and using digital investigative tools with a little creativity. There are so many verification tricks and tools available now. This is your condensed guide to the wizardry of verification. It includes essential concepts, checklists and our favourite tips and techniques. Most importantly, it will introduce you to the five pillars of verification, and serve as a quick reference for how to tackle each one.

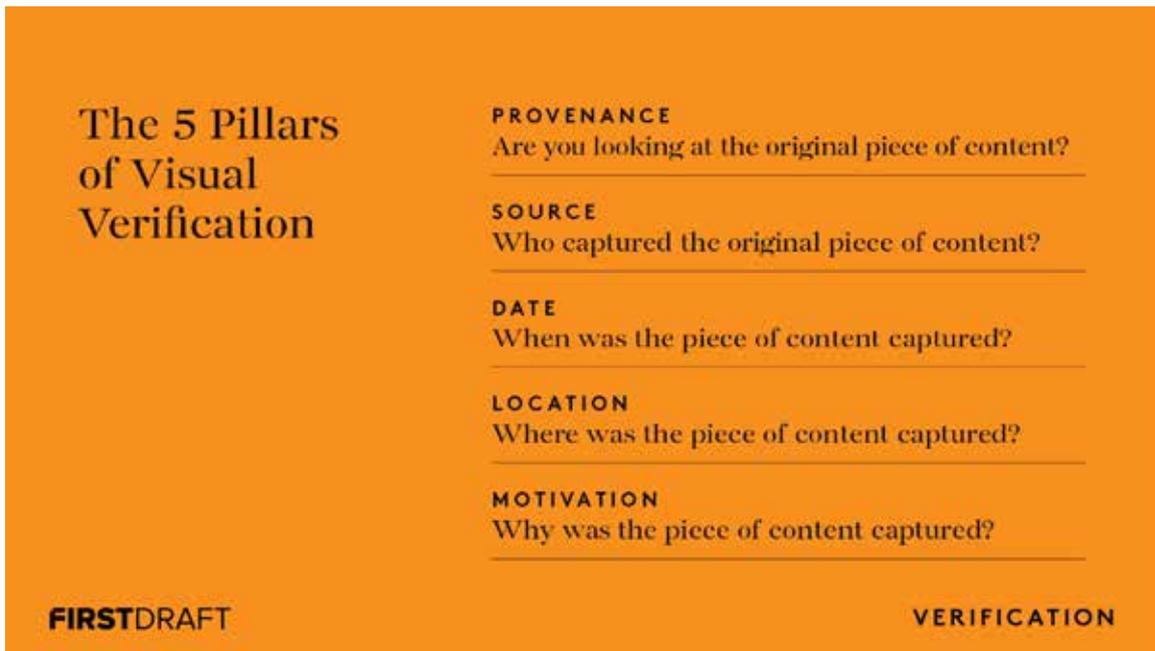
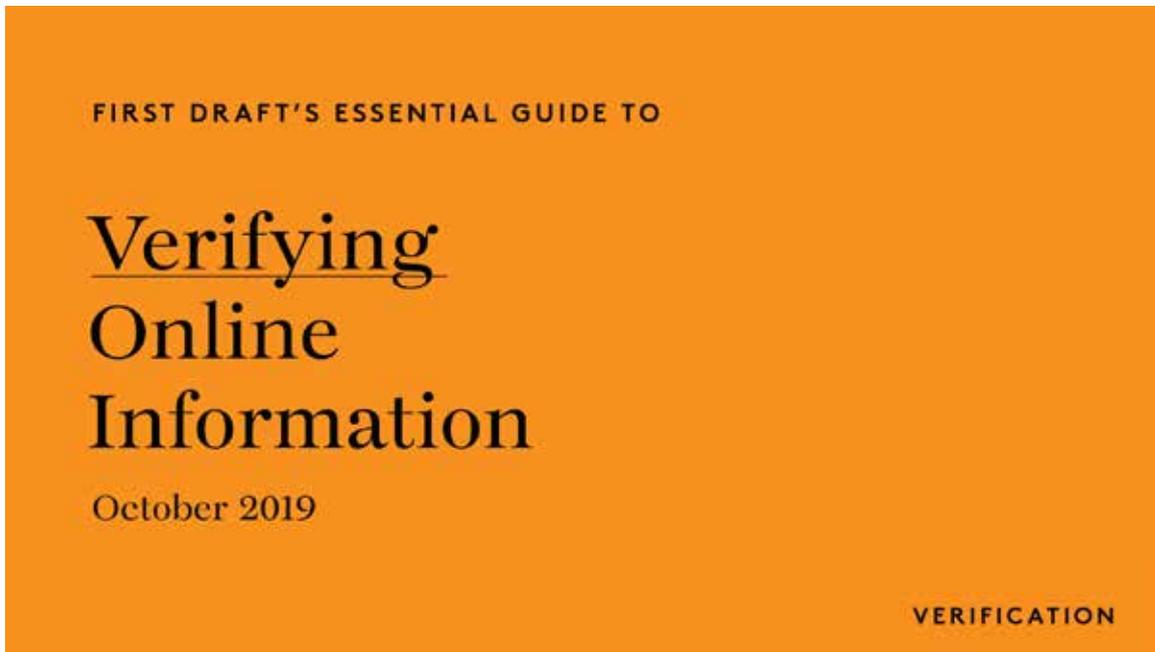
### VERIFICATION TRAINING [VIDEO]

#### Quick Start to Verifying Media

<https://firstdraftnews.org/en/education/course/verification-quick-start/1/>

#### Verification Training for Journalists

<https://firstdraftnews.org/en/education/course/verification-curriculum/1/lesson-1-intro-wardle>



Source:

**First Draft Essential Guide to Verifying Online Information (PDF) 2019**

[https://firstdraftnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Verifying\\_Online\\_Information\\_Digital\\_AW.pdf?x32994](https://firstdraftnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Verifying_Online_Information_Digital_AW.pdf?x32994)

**Quick Reference Guide (Online):** <https://firstdraftnews.org/latest/verifying-online-information-the-absolute-essentials>



## MEDIA & SOCIAL MEDIA DISINFORMATION



<https://defyhatenow.org/media-social-media-disinformation-2/>

### Media Articles

#defyhatenow Cameroon localisation content media reports, videos and podcast with relevant social media perspectives on critical engagement with media and disinformation / hate speech awareness & mitigation training

#### Cameroon's hashtag war - deadly battle over language

12 Apr 2019 Al Jazeera Podcasts

<https://www.aljazeera.com/podcasts/thetake/2019/04/cameroon-deadly-battle-language-190412143608732.html>

Hundreds of people have been killed in the country's Anglophone regions, rights groups say, as the conflict over language continues. In this episode of The Take, we look at how Al Jazeera has covered the conflict on the ground and what they've learned from the hundreds of WhatsApp messages the network's Newsgrid programme has exchanged with Cameroonians.

#### In Cameroon, social media plays key role in vote campaign

21/09/2018 Yaoundé (AFP)

<https://www.france24.com/en/20180921-cameroon-social-media-plays-key-role-vote-campaign>

Footage of abuses published on Facebook, politicians tweeting their every move: for the first time, the West African state of Cameroon is heading into a presidential election in which social media is taking a central role.

?

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What is disinformation?

How does it cause harm?

Who benefits from false content?

- Is the story balanced / neutral / biased?
- How does social media affect the narrative?
- What rumours or stories have you heard that may be misinformation?
- Where did you hear them – via social media, in person, over the phone, reported in the traditional media (news sites, radio, tv)?
- How does misinformation affect you and the community?
- How do you decide if the story is true or false?
- What tools do you have to verify information?
- Was the story propaganda, and if so can who benefits?
- Identify who is the source and question their agenda or intention.



## #FACTSMATTER237 TRAINING

### Hate Speech Sensitisation & Awareness

Critically engaged and media literate readers with the skills and tools to navigate the media. Stop the spread of disinformation, hate speech and incitement to violence.

- On traditional media - publications, radio, ethical journalism
- Via social media - engaged citizen bloggers, readers, producers & consumers
- In private groups - whatsapp, fb groups
- Channels and formats - video / private chat / posts / shares / comments

During the workshop, find examples of each type of misinformation/disinformation:

- False content
- Manipulated content
- Fabricated content
- Ideology related / propaganda / paid
- Taken deliberately out of context
- Manipulated / Hoax / Satire / Parody



Facts Matter Training, Cameroon



## #FACTSMATTER237 EXERCISE

Find examples of misinformation/disinformation, rumour, false or manipulated content, hoax and propaganda stories from Cameroon. Read these critically, questioning everything from the content and details of the story, the spread and the effect, to show the effects this kind of misinformation and rumours have on the society and inflaming or reducing conflict.

- 1 What is the story about?  
(give a brief outline of the details in the story.)
- 2 What category of misinformation?  
(in what ways was the content false, hoax or manipulated?)
- 3 How did it spread?  
(eg whatsapp groups, fb, twitter, instagram etc - on what channels)
- 4 What was the effect on you, on your community, on the country??  
(people's emotional response, the spread of the message)  
(did it lead to violence / retaliation / arrests etc)
- 5 How was the story addressed?  
(Was the original post retracted, errors fixed,, was it republished?)

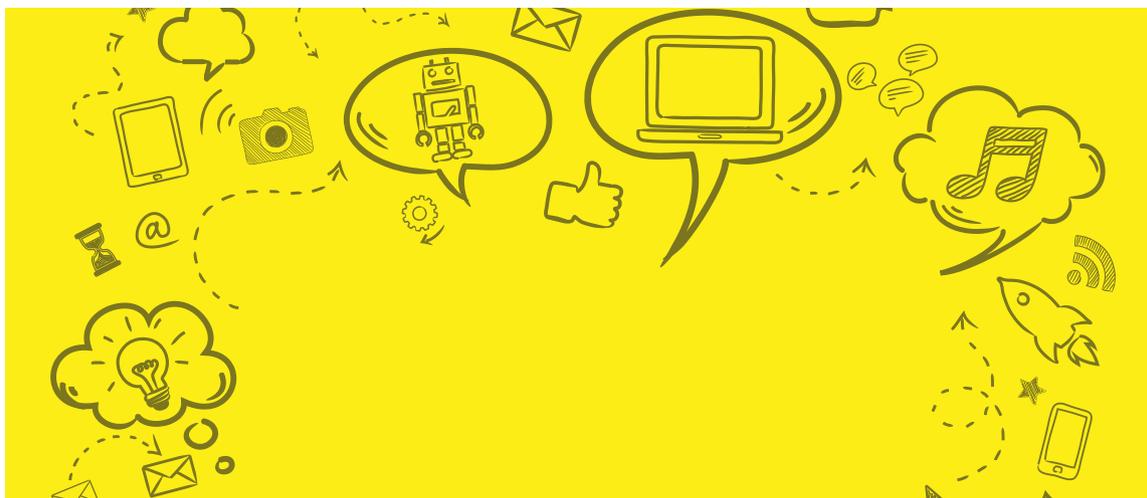
### MISINFORMATION, MANIPULATED & FALSE CONTENT

- **Satire et Parodie:** Florian Ngimbis' blog: "the day I died on a bed in the central hospital in Yaoundé."
- **Misleading publication:** The image of the first lady on May 20, 2019; photos of the Daphne fight that led to him being accused of drug addiction; and during the elections rumours of internet cuts.

- **False content sites: people use popular stars information and pretend to be them.**
- **Fabricated content:** Humiliation: Paul Biya finds himself in boxer shorts at the Palace of unity an article by Boris Bertold
- **False connection:** false images of war victims from other countries that were attributed to Cameroon (cameroonweb)
- **False content:** road accidents false images circulate long before the real ones appear. Dschang and Bafoussam accident / Eseka accident.
- **Manipulated content:** Atanga Nji's video distributes food to the NOSO populations. The video was cut to deceive and manipulate public opinion.



## #FACTSMATTERS237 FELLOWSHIP REPORT



<https://defyhatenow.org/report-for-the-factsmatter237-fellowship/>

Following the #FactsMatters237 training the #defyhatenow team is building a network of fact-checkers and data journalists in Cameroon. This is one of their reports analysing the use of social media in relation to hate speech.

Social media for the week of January 4-10th 2020 was characterized by attacks on political figures and ethnic groups. Most of the attacks can broadly be categorized under hate speech. As a result of the upcoming February twin elections in Cameroon, the intensity of these attacks have increased both online and offline.

### Fake news/Propaganda

As February approaches, there have been calls for a lockdown from February 7-12 by Ambazonian leaders. The calls have gone as far as threatening those who want to run for elections and those who are going to be seen out on the day of the election. In responding to the threat to life and property there has been an increase in the deployment of troops which the separatists have interpreted by saying Government has deployed the military to the regions to vote in favour of the regime in place.

Here is a Facebook page link for Baretta News which has 47,049 followers and posted the story.

<https://web.facebook.com/BarettaNews/>

\*\*\*The screenshots of the same can be seen below:



Finally, there have also been some propaganda and threats issued by some Facebook users as it can be seen from the video in the following link:

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=793208877819502&id=100013911900260](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=793208877819502&id=100013911900260)



## NEXT STEPS #ACT4PEACE237

Global Initiative for Digital Inclusion and Communication kick starts activities for #Act4peace237 campaign. In a press briefing, the Executive Director for GIDICom Madame Pedmia Shatu Tita, presented the concept note of the Campaign.

“

#Act4peace237 is an awareness campaign led by #defyhatenow that aims to create public awareness about the dangers of misinformation, fake news, violence against women and hate speech in Cameroon.

”

Violators have resorted to the Photoshop of nude pictures and videos of women to the extent of asking them to give a ransom or the images will be leaked. This is a serious violation of human rights and it causes hate and disdain on the online economy. She urged journalists to encourage citizens to take small “hygienic” steps to mitigate hate speech and incitement to violence. She said there is a need to have more conversations on these issues at home, schools and in the workplace.

Each person has an obligation to use Social Media responsibly and use the online mechanisms for reporting hate speech and misinformation online. #Act4peace237 is a wakeup call to all users of the online platform to change the narratives in the way things are perceived online and offline. Our “clicks” should go a long way to build peace. Let us work to have a #HateFreeCameroon, she concluded.

The activities for the campaign are a press conference, online campaign from January 20-30 and a ‘fireside session’ with women who surf the internet and are from these affected areas by the conflict so that they share their stories and it equally important can serve as a trauma healing therapy.



# 4

## Civil Society: Social Media Code of Conduct



## 04 CIVIL SOCIETY: SOCIAL MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT CONTENTS

#DEFYHATENOW CODE OF CONDUCT

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ONLINE

AFRICAN GOVERNMENT LAWS TO FIGHT CYBER BULLYING

HOW 'LOVE SAVVY' ARE YOU?

CASE STUDY: FEMALE LEADERSHIP & ONLINE BULLYING

SAFE SISTERS TOOLKIT

ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES

PANAFRITIVISM

THE BLOGGERS ASSOCIATION OF KENYA - BAKE

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA AND JOURNALISTS

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## #DEFYHATENOW | CHAPTER 4

# CIVIL SOCIETY: SOCIAL MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT



## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What is cyber-bullying?

How does sexual harassment affect women online?

Why is civil society action & education important?



## #DEFYHATENOW SOCIAL MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT

Please be aware that in most cases what you write, link and refer to online is public and can be shared with anyone. Distinctions are generally not made between 'private' and 'professional' opinions. Statements, tagging or other actions, including 'Liking' comments etc. on Facebook can be interpreted as a direct reflection of your opinion regardless of the context. These actions, even if not your intention, can be taken out of context and be used against you, your colleagues, your work etc.

Agreeing on, and adhering to a common set of guidelines will strengthen your own work in hate speech and online incitement mitigation by helping to identify irregularities, hoaxes or the ways in which rumours spread!

While it is neither possible - nor desirable - to 'police' social media usage, awareness and strict application of these guidelines is in your own personal and professional best interest! These guidelines are based on the "Journal of Mass Media Ethics" by Shannon A. Bowen (School of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of South Carolina, USA).

### Values, Mission and Goals

It is important to talk openly about “why” we are doing this. A social media campaign starts with understanding our values and goals and having it in mind as we prepare to share online. This can help us avoid sharing posts that do not reflect these values, and selecting what and when to share for the most positive impact on social media.

### **GOALS.**

1. Community Engagement.
2. Outreach to new community circles and Cameroonian diasporas in different countries.
3. #HateFreeCameroon Brand Building (social media engage people online and offline)

### **BE TRANSPARENT.**

Acting in a transparent manner can prevent audiences from being misled about your organisation’s intentions or meanings when it contributes on social media. Communication should be identified as individual speech or speech on behalf of an organisation. All individuals that contribute social media content for your organisation should be required to identify any personal social media interactions as such. Be upfront if the views being expressed are personal. If you have your own blog or other public website, it’s wise to use a disclaimer like this: “The views expressed on this website/blog are my own and do not reflect those of my institution or its clients.”

### **BE CLEAR AND CONSISTENT.**

Post clear messages. Take responsibility for the content you post. Be consistent in how and when you post, because this allows to build trust and understanding with the audience that is a key component of strong relationships.

### **VERIFY SOURCES AND DATA.**

Be consistently credible; do NOT use misinformation, share or forward rumours or repeat speculation.

### **CHECK YOUR FACTS.**

Check facts on the information you post. You should first verify information and rumours, then consider the content of your posts rationally before posting. Try to examine messages from all possible perspectives to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation.

### **BE ACCURATE.**

Posts should be accurate and fact-checked and capable of substantiation. If you make a mistake, ensure you correct it promptly. It is important to reference the earlier comment because even if the erroneous comment has been deleted, someone may have saved it as an image.

### **BE FAIR AND RESPECTFUL.**

Never post malicious, misleading or unfair content about your organisation, colleagues, competitors or other stakeholders. Do not post content that is obscene, defamatory, threatening or discriminatory to any person, individual, brand or tribe. Do not post comments that you would not say directly to another person and consider how other people might react before you post. If you do respond to published comments that you may consider unfair, always be accurate and professional. Remember to be authentic, constructive and respectful.

### **BE PROFESSIONAL.**

Always act in a professional and constructive manner and use sound judgement before posting. Stay polite in tone and respectful of individuals’ opinions, especially when discussions become heated. Show proper consideration for other people’s privacy.

### **BE GOOD.**

Encourage the good, helping to build connectedness, engagement, and community. Following this logic, with every post, consider your intention, which should reflect the organisation’s philosophy and social media goals as well as simple consistent peaceful & good intentions.

### **BE SMART.**

Respect other people's intellectual property, including trademarked names, slogans and copyrighted material. Assume that all content online is protected by copyright. Make sure you have permission to post copyright items, properly attribute the work to the copyright owner where required, and never use someone else's work as if it were your own. Respect all laws and regulations re: copyright, IP, privacy and spam when publishing on social media.

### #defyhatenow Social Media Channels

twitter: @defyhatenow

fb: defyhatenow

Defyhatenow.org

## Social Media Responsible Use Guidelines

### SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT GUIDE

Every tweet, post, comment, or reply should be:

- Positive and courteous to the online community
- Simple and easy to understand
- Engage and encourage participation through questions or calls to action.
- Non-political / politically neutral
- Proper language, grammar, and format (slang is ok, but may not be understood)
- Visually stimulating (photo, quote, or video)
- Use hashtags (#), handles (@name), and tags to highlight sources and trends



## GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ONLINE

By Pedmia Shatu Tita

Gender-based violence can be seen as a life-threatening, global health and human rights issue that violates international human rights law and principles of gender equality. It is also a threat to lasting peace.

Gender-based violence (GBV) online takes many forms including hacking, impersonation, surveillance/tracking, harassment/spamming, recruiting victims into violent situations, and malicious distribution of intimate photos and messages. It is a neglected form of GBV which is pervasive as women are harassed online every minute around the world. This exacerbates women's digital exclusion and self-censorship. "Violence against women online" report by Amnesty International in 2018 shows the statistics on violence of women online and most specifically twitter.

### International Policy & Gender Inclusion

**The Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Helpdesk** offers specialist advice to provide social development expertise and management in order to ensure that social inclusion, gender, equality and human rights are central to the development process and address violence against women and girls worldwide. They report limited data on the extent of online GBV and particularly on what works to prevent it. The dynamism of the technological environment and contextual differences in platforms used in different countries makes it challenging to design and evaluate responses that are appropriate to multiple regions and platforms. However, more governments are starting to make laws to fight cyberbullying. "In October 2019, South Africa passed an updated version of its cyber law that include provisions that specifically criminalise non-consensual pornography (commonly known as revenge porn).

In the same month, it was announced that Zimbabwe's cabinet had approved a bill that would also, among other things, criminalise cyberbullying. Ghana also announced that it would enact a law that would

have the same effect. African countries are taking action against the growing menace of cyberbullying and other related cyber crimes.”

### **Half the world on mute: online harassment**

For women journalists, online harassment and abuse aren't just questions of workplace safety but also of censorship, writes Canadian DW editor Michaela Cavanagh. DW Freedom 2019

<https://www.dw.com/en/half-the-world-on-mute-the-fight-against-online-harassment/a-51013693>

As the work of journalists increasingly takes place online, we spend more of our lives inhabiting this digital world – and for some, it's a hostile environment. A 2018 Amnesty International study analyzed 14 million tweets received by 778 women journalists and politicians and found that in 2017, a woman was abused on Twitter every 30 seconds – with Black women and women of color respectively 84% and 34% more likely to be harassed than white women.

### **Amnesty International, Toxic Twitter: Women's Experiences of Violence and Abuse on Twitter,**

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2018/03/online-violence-against-women-chapter-3/>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2018/03/online-violence-against-women-chapter-3/>

Tanya O'Carroll, the director of Amnesty Tech, calls online abuse what it is: a form of censorship. “Especially given that Facebook, Twitter and others talk about the fact that they're mainly there to promote freedom of expression, they're very reluctant to take down content,” she says. “These platforms are talking about the censorship consequences of removing content, but what about the censorship consequences of this kind of targeted harassment? What are the net consequences of silencing women in this very orchestrated way? Women turning off their accounts or turning away from sharing specific kinds of content, for example sharing political views – those are also censorship consequences,” says O'Carroll.

### **Women Journalists and safety online**

UNESCO is making a stand against the online harassment of women journalists, who face ever-increasing amounts of gender-based threats and attacks. Insults, public shaming, intimidation, hacking and cyber-stalking are behaviors that women journalists are systematically confronted with on the Internet.

Attacks against female journalists pose a clear threat not only to their safety and well-being, but also to the diversity of the press and freedom of expression. In addition to disproportionately affecting women, online harassment often follows other multi-layered and intersecting patterns of discrimination, including racism, homophobia, and xenophobia. UNESCO organised conference “Standing up against online harassment of women journalists – What works?” aims to tackle the online harassment of women journalists, with prominent women journalists from Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark and Nigeria, experts from Twitter, The Guardian and Libération, prosecutors and lawyers dealing with cases of online harassment.

### **Cameroon Online Dating & Intimacy**

The cases of online GBV are glaringly typical in the Cameroon context where women who surf the internet suffer harassment either by stalking, sex chats and video calls, demands for nudes, hacking and threats for extortion. The most common of these is online sexual harassment.

People visit the internet for diverse reasons, one of which is for love either hoping to meet someone they could flirt with or someone they can spend eternity. In Cameroon, the most popular platform for chatting and dating is Facebook. The number of Facebook users in Cameroon in November 2019 accounts for 13.8% of its entire population. The majority are men - 57.8%. People aged 25 to 34 are the largest user group (1,370,000). The highest difference between men and women occurs within people aged 25 to 34, where men lead by 170,000.

The trend in Cameroon is scouting the internet for beautiful and attractive looking women/girls and sending them a friend request on Facebook. If the lady finds the man attractive too, they get to chatting and exchange of contacts which leads them to whatsapp chats, calling and texting. Some of these relationships get intimate and because of distance when the urge to have sex may arise and cannot be

fully attained, many online couples decide to have online sex on video calls or share their nude pictures with their partners to attain their sexual desire.

Should the relationship turn sour, the men having these images begin threatening the girl for money or to stay in the relationship. We have had cases in Cameroon where girls have been threatened and leaked nude videos have circulated online which has caused many girls and women to retreat from the internet. The idea of sharing nudes with one's partner because of distance, has led to a debate on whether it is advisable or not to share nude pictures.

### Risks of Sexual Harassment Online

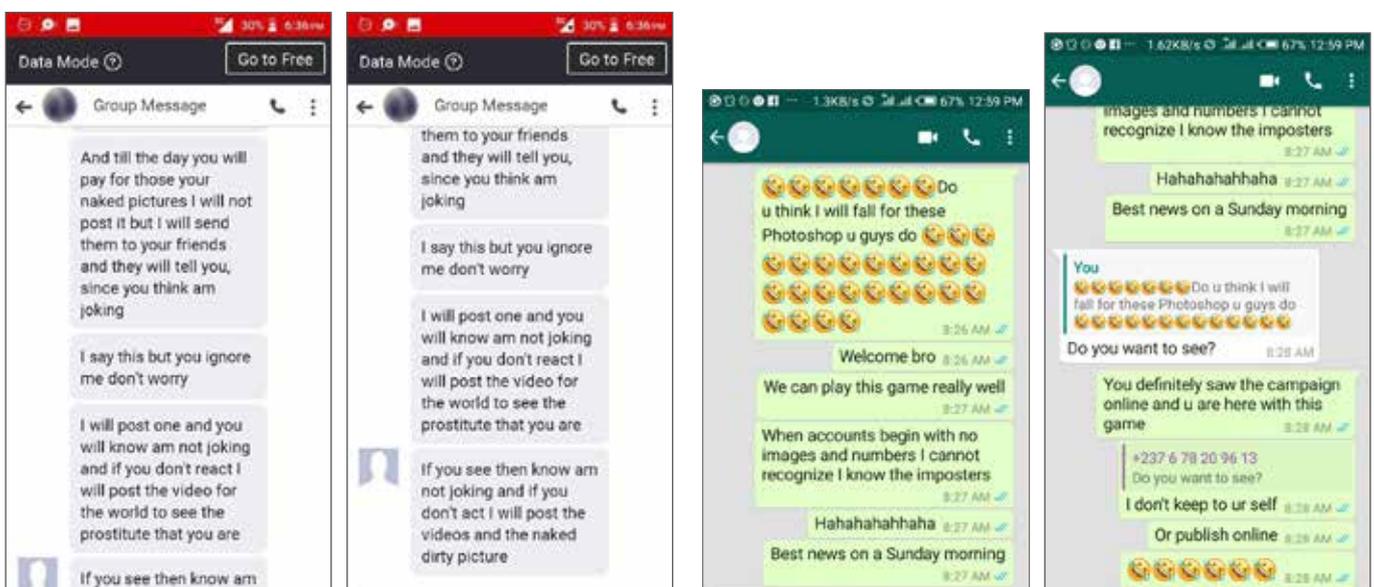
In an interview with Rosaline Obah Akah, Peace and Conflict Transformation trainer, she holds that the idea of sexual satisfaction through videos or nudes is not taboo, particularly for couples with some legal binding but living in different places.

She says "I don't think any married man will want to expose his wife's nudes, so I am more comfortable and see nothing wrong with them doing that. I strongly discourage the practice where girls who meet boys online and get carried away emotionally (to the point where) the girls become trigger happy to share nudes with them. This is what has put a rise on the spread of nudes because they have no marital engagement and should they expose the nudes of the said girl, it really doesn't matter to the boy. Unlike a married man who knows if my wife's nudes are out there, it also touches on his person".

The last quarter of 2019 in Cameroon witnessed a rise in sexual harassment online particularly of women, as many more women were willing to share their stories to educate other women and expose the perpetrators of violent attacks online.

The trend in the past months has been guys contacting girls claiming they have their nude pictures and requesting they negotiate for the girl to send money otherwise her nudes will be exposed. Glaringly, the images they send are manipulated in Photoshop. But to most girls who don't understand image verification, they panic and send money to the guys and apparently they become their number 1 client since there is no surety that they will discard of the images after paying them money. Once they discover you are smart, they block you and get on to the next.

I am a survivor of their scam and below are screenshots of the chats in one of their attempts. Just in a month, I have had two of such failed scamming trials.



Adeline Ogwe is a survivor of gender based violence online. She explains that "I have been violated online so many times. My account has been hacked and used to spread pornographic images, men harass me sexually online but the most shocking one which made me deactivate my account for over 3 weeks now

is the one of a guy threatening me about sharing my nudes if I do not give him 150,000 FCFA. I became worried because he sent me a couple of nudes with my face on them. I am not too digitally literate, so I couldn't even tell whether it was fake or Photoshop or what. I thought out for days. Yes I know I do nudes with my husband because he lives in Douala and we live in Bamenda. He is an okada rider and due to the crisis his job raised him very little income so he moved. That's the only way we can satisfy our emotional urge. I thought about whether when sending the nudes, I sent it to someone else, but that wasn't even possible.

I was so worried that at one moment I felt like sending him the money because I didn't want my image to be tarnished. I decided to complain to a friend who laughed and told me it was a scam. I didn't believe it. So I explained to my pastor who called him and warned him of the implications. The perpetrator insisted on spreading the nudes and the pastor told him to go ahead if it will give him the money. After that, I decided to deactivate my Facebook account and I answer no more calls or reply to messages from strange numbers."

It should be noted that many girls have silently gone through such trauma in the hands of these actors who inflict mental pain and torture on them. The girls end up not seeing any reason to be online and the next thing they will do will be to either deactivate their accounts like Ogwe Adeline did.

### Legal Implications of GBV in Cameroon

Cameroon has no specific law to address Gender based violence online, but in its Law No 2010/0 12 of 21st December 2010 relating to cyber security and cyber criminality in Cameroon, Section 75{1} holds that whoever for financial gain, records or publishes images that undermines the bodily integrity of another person through electronic communications or an information system without the consent of the person concerned shall be punished with imprisonment from two to five years or a fine of from 1,000,000 to 5,000,000 CFA francs or both fine and imprisonment. Unfortunately such culprits are yet to be known as it seems almost impossible to lay hands on the actual face behind the crime, since some hack people's accounts and the named account owner may be innocent. It is therefore very important for the Government of Cameroon to work in collaboration with telecommunication companies to bring out these culprits.



## AFRICAN GOVERNMENT LAWS TO FIGHT CYBER BULLYING

November 16th, 2019

By Cyril Zenda

Both Nigeria and Tanzania passed laws to deal with cyber bullying in 2015, followed by Botswana and Uganda in 2017 and then Kenya in 2018. For Zambia and Rwanda and many other countries, the laws are still a work in progress.

With many African cultures placing a lot of emphasis on female chastity, cyber bullying – which is now seen as growing form of gender-based violence – has been identified as a serious threat to women, including their potential to be leaders.

Koliwe Majama, an African media, internet and communications expert says the sharp rise in technology-related violence against women and its normalisation has made the use of the Internet a gendered issue. "It has, of necessity, become imperative that women get to the fore of the debate on cyber-security instead of leaving it solely to governments and the financial/business sector as is the case in national and regional governance forums," said Majama.

Source: <https://www.fairplanet.org/story/hope-for-african-women-as-more-governments-make-laws-to-fight-cyber-bullying/>



## HOW 'LOVE SAVVY' ARE YOU?



DW #mediadev online exercise: quiz & sextortion video

<https://www.dw.com/en/take-the-media-literacy-quiz/a-46019272>



## CASE STUDY: FEMALE LEADERSHIP & EFFECTS OF ONLINE BULLYING

By Boitshepo Balozwi

Women in leadership positions specifically in politics, including those aspiring to be politicians have been unduly targeted by online violence and have experienced the wrath of online abuse, threats and bullying. Compared to that of men, female online harassment is considered to be more racial, religious and sexual in nature. International and local female politicians such as Angela Merkel (Germany), Theresa May (UK), Hillary Clinton (US) and our very own Hon. Makgato have all experienced the wrath of this form of attack. Clinton was dubbed a “Grandmother-in-chief”, a picture showing a bit of Merkel’s cleavage was the focus of an online attack, Makgato was vilified for donning sport shoes during a parliamentary session, “I had hurt my ankle and decided to wear comfortable shoes,” says Makgato. In Zimbabwe during the previous and now disputed elections, female contestants running for positions in parliament were ruthlessly slut-shamed, degraded and crowned as “Hure” a Shona language word meaning prostitute. The argument at the symposium was that this same outlandish treatment is not accorded to male politicians.

Rhoda Sekgororoane, from Emang Basadi and the Botswana Movement of Democracy (BMD) political party explained how she can relate to the online harassment of Clinton, particularly the focus on her age, “For some reason the perception is that it is us women who seem to be getting older quickly, and not male politicians.” Sekgororoane recalled how she was taunted by some men during a What’s App group conversation, “Go home or else we will eat you,” they warned her.

The politician shared how she almost quit politics because of the negativity that emanated from social media, and was directed at her, “Re lapile bageaetsho! We have already lost two women, who were contesting for the upcoming 2019 elections. I don’t know how we will ever increase women representation

in parliament,” says Sekgororoane. Theresa Mmolawa another member of the opposition here in Botswana also supported the overall sentiment that this online harassment serves to deter female politicians and to allow their male colleagues to dominate the stage:

“We are socialized to believe men are the only capable leaders. We need to be educated, and women should not be intimidated or scarred from running.”

Sekgororoane. Theresa Mmolawa

Adding her voice was Gomolemo Rasesigo, from Gender Links Botswana who agrees that online bullying is a different way of intimidating women, “But we cannot run away from social media,” says the gender activist. For one, female candidates cannot avoid the use of social media in their campaigns as online media is an asset which helps reach out to potential voters and increases awareness of the different politicians. Rasesigo added that therefore women need to be empowered with the skills to navigate social media, and that it remains critical for civil society advocates and institutions to be supported to empower women of all political parties.

Other female parliamentarians from the region commented on their experiences with social media. A representative from Lesotho who has served as an MP since 2001, and whose husband is also an MP explained how social media almost broke up her family, “Online bullying is a major threat to democracy, and it is also a major threat to family. My husband and I suffered the wrath of this bullying. It is thanks to my belief in God that we are still standing.” The Lesotho representative explained that it is the hordes of people who have the responsibility to tarnish anything that opposes their political views who spend time bullying the other side, “My question is what kind of community are we becoming? Our children are also humiliated. We need to go back to the basics of humility.”

A female representative from the Free State in South Africa observes that supporting party lines at the expense of common goals is another factor fueling the flames. She also reminded women that if they do not support each other, nobody else will, “And it is even sadder when the cyberbullying happens women to women or from other sisters who are sometimes hell bent on supporting their husbands over other female politicians.”

From Kwazulu Natal, the representative shared how she has observed this online abuse targeted at women in institutions of higher learning, women who she says continue to suffer in silence and end up taking their lives.

“We have a great responsibility as women in parliament to give these educators a platform to dialogue.”

Kwazulu Natal

In the region countries such as Zimbabwe, Uganda, Kenya and Botswana have enacted, revised or a working on legislation to target technology related violence including cyber espionage, revenge pornography, pornography, and false information.

Stella Moroka, from the Attorney General’s Chambers in Botswana explained that new provisions are being

introduced to curb cyber bullying and relating harassment. Moroka also added that there are other victims of online abuse such as women who are being trafficked on social media, and young people who are being radicalized and recruited into organized crime.

### Recommendations from the meeting include:

- Policy and legislation to criminalise cyber bullying
- Implementation and enforcement of such laws
- Increase female parliamentarians so that communities understand that politics is not a male domain.
- Programs to support, sensitize, educate and rehabilitate those affected by online crimes,
- United Nations (UN) Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights applied to social media.
- Educating communities, particularly those in patriarchal societies.

<https://genderlinks.org.za/news/cyber-bullying-an-emerging-threat-to-female-leadership/>



## SAFE SISTERS TOOLKIT



<https://safesisters.net/>

Safe Sisters is a fellowship program for women human rights defenders, journalists or media workers, and activists that trains them to be able to understand and respond to the digital security challenges they face in their work and daily life. Through a combination of self-study, tool practice, mentorship, workshops, peer sharing, and small grants, these cohorts of women will join forces to take on the most pressing digital challenges that keep women from being able to live and be online safely.

It's hard enough being a human rights defender without having to worry about our technology betraying us. It's not possible to expect everybody to keep up with the steps necessary to avoid viruses, loss of important files, spying, hacking, blackmail, account hijacking, and other unfun digital emergencies. On top of that, women human rights defenders especially face cyber-harassment and bullying online. East Africa needs a league of women technologists working within civil society who can dispense appropriate advice and support for people facing these high-tech challenges. And that's exactly what we hope to create with Safe Sister!

### Download Safe Sisters Toolkit:

<https://safesisters.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Safe-Sister-Guide-revised.pdf>

Safe Sisters content: Internews.

Safe Sister images by Pollicy  
Thank you Haley Slafer



## ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES

Civil society plays a critical role in advancing the protection and promotion of human rights – even where this may not be a central part of their mandate. Their activities can be central in responding to ‘hate speech’ as they can provide the space for formal and informal interactions between people of similar or diverse backgrounds, and platforms from which individuals can exercise freedom of expression and tackle inequality and discrimination.

At the local, national, regional and international levels, civil society initiatives are among the most innovative and effective for monitoring and responding to incidents of intolerance and violence, as well as for countering “hate speech.”

Civil society initiatives are often designed and implemented by the individuals and communities most affected by discrimination and violence, and provide unique possibilities for communicating positive messages to and educating the public, as well as monitoring the nature and impact of discrimination. Ensuring a safe and enabling environment for civil society to operate is therefore also crucial.

### Role Of Civil Society Organisations & International Ngos

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and International organisations (INGOs) are strong partners of the government as far as preventing and countering hate speech and violent extremism are concerned.

Organisations and institutions include the Cameroon Digital Coalition, Local Youth Corner Cameroon (LOYOC), Network for Solidarity, Empowerment and Transformation for All (NEWSETA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Network for Community Development (NECOD), STRAWACADEMY, ADEV, Big Steps Outreach Cameroon (BONET), The PCC Peace Office, the Cameroon Communication Council, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC), etc.

- Introduce or reinforce cross-cultural exchanges between people from different regions of the country and people from other countries that have experienced the effect of hate speech to share their different experiences with lessons learned.
- NGOs can monitor the media for instances of hate speech, while also using the media to respond to particular cases of hate speech and to advance the fight against discrimination and hate crime.
- A significant barrier to forces of law and order in investigating hate speech that appear to violate laws is the lack of training on the technical issues involved in identifying who is responsible and where those sites originate and proving who is responsible for the content. CSOs, NGOs and INGOs may be able to supplement investigations by providing technical expertise to train police officers and other government peace building stakeholders on these issues. These organisations can also play a major role in providing training and other educational materials against hate speech online and through social media.
- NGOs have been responsible for the closure of websites dedicated to hate speech. They have done so through direct intervention with service providers and government agencies and bringing legal action. NGOs have been successful in persuading online authors, owners or Internet service providers to remove hate sites and discriminatory expressions from the Internet, particularly in states with hate-speech laws. In the case of Cameroon where there exists no legislation on hate speech, NGOs can work with government agencies and internet service providers (Camtel, MTN, etc.) and social networks (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) to delimit or prohibit the use of certain language terms in the context of Cameroon.

- Organisations could work with government and intergovernmental agencies to develop and implement deliberate policies through sports, cultural competitions and educational activities like quiz and essay competitions among different regions of the country to promote cohesion among the different cultural groups in Cameroon.
- Organize a rigorous nationwide education campaign targeted at various groups ranging from students, traders and market women, public sector employees, traditional and religious organizations as well security institutions. The education campaign must include messages that promote harmony among different groups within the country. This campaign should make use of all communication mediums online and offline as well as enable the creation of contents through music, comedy, poetry, films, art work, etc.

*Recommendations from Hate Speech and Violent Conflict in Cameroon Report by Local Youth Corner Cameroon, 2019*



## PANAFRITIVISM

**By James Wamathai**

There are more people accessing the Internet in Africa than in North America, South America and in the Middle East. There are 525 million internet users in Africa, 447 million in South America, 328 million in North America, and 174 million in the Middle East.

With an internet penetration of around 40%, this means that a significant number of Africans are able to access some form of Internet. Most of these Internet users access the Internet via mobile. According to a study by Pew Research, Africans use the Internet to stay in touch with family and friends, access news on politics, and information about Government services and health. They also use it to access entertainment content, apply for jobs and for online shopping.

As with other parts of the world, the Internet has enabled the fast access and sharing of information on the continent. The Internet has democratized the flow of information on a continent where access to such content was limited due to either underdeveloped infrastructure or just cost. Through this medium, Africans have been able not just to receive information but also to comment on it and share their point of view. This has led to the expansion of freedom of expression.

### **Why Is Expansion Of Freedom Of Expression Important?**

In the past, it was hard for African citizens to access a platform to be able to share their thoughts and opinions publicly. This is because the conduits that existed were limited and were not accessible to everyone.

Now, through access to the Internet Africans are able to share unfiltered ideas and conversations about their lives, politics and other things that they care about. It has created a safe space for expression for not only ordinary citizens but also creatives, and activists.

These conversations are shared on various platforms that include; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and also on blogs. The content shared includes mundane, every day social content but it's the social commentary that touches on governance issues that is of note. Thanks to these platforms, ordinary citizens are able to voice their opinions on various governance issues. This brought about the rise of online thought leaders who were either bloggers or influencers. This digital activism has been critical in keeping the government in check.

African Governments had not anticipated that the Internet would aid their citizens in expressing themselves and so had not prepared for the onslaught of free thought from its citizens. They also discovered that they could not control it in the same way they had been using policies and regulations

to muzzle mainstream media. In essence, digital activism made them uneasy. This is against the right to freedom of expression which is guaranteed in most African constitutions. Most constitutions predate the Internet, but it has been argued that the same rights that we enjoy offline should be enjoyed online. To control the digital space and to intimidate citizens from publishing critiques of the state, African Governments started using obscure laws to silence their online critics.

Those that have gotten into trouble this way include Mauritanian blogger Mohamed Ali Abdel Aziz, Kenyan blogger Anthony Njoroge, Nigerian blogger Emenike Iroegbu and the founder of Tanzania's Jamii Forum, Maxence Melo. Their cases are similar in that they stepped on powerful toes within government and had to be promptly intimidated. The idea is to deter others who may be interested in doing the same.

African Governments have quickly adapted to the new reality of dealing with dissent online by enacting new laws that are specifically designed to target online content creators. Uganda passed a law in 2010 dubbed the Computer Misuse Act which has offenses that include cyber harassment and offensive communication. The Ugandan Government has charged various online activists with these offenses. Most recently, Makerere University lecturer and human rights activist Stella Nyanzi was convicted for cyber harassment after writing a Facebook post in which she called the president "a pair of buttocks" and the first lady "empty-brained". She later wrote a poem bemoaning the fact that the president's deceased mother had not aborted him. She was awarded the PEN Freedom of Expression prize in January 2020, however she is still in prison and currently appealing her conviction.

Litigation has come in handy to counter some of these laws that threaten freedom of expression and other rights online. In May 2016, three civil society organizations in Nigeria, namely the Media Rights Agenda, Paradigm Initiative and Enough Is Enough Nigeria went to court to challenge the constitutionality of Sections 24 and 38 of the Cybercrimes Act 2015. According to Tope Ogundipe, Paradigm Initiative's Director of Programs, "It bears repeating here that Section 24 of the Cybercrimes Act deals with Cyberstalking and that section has been repeatedly used to harass and persecute journalists and critics. It's arguably the most dangerous provision against freedom of speech, opinion, and inquiry. Sections 38 provides for the duties of a service provider vis-a-vis data retention and contains provisions that we believe are too vague and borderline unconstitutional."

Governments are not only using laws to quell dissent. Another increasingly common tactic used is shutting down the internet or blocking certain websites and social media platforms. In 2018, Chad blocked access to Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, among others. They were blocked after the conclusion of a national conference which recommended changes to the constitution, to allow President Idriss Deby to remain in power until 2033. Critics of the President had successfully mobilized using Social Media platforms and the government viewed them as a threat, which is why the restrictions were imposed. Internet Without Borders, an organization that works on digital rights in Africa and elsewhere, launched a campaign against the Internet restriction in Chad in January 2019. The Social Media ban was finally lifted in July 2019.

African content creators were also caught unawares by the wave of Government aggression and something had to be done. Organizations such as CIPESA have stepped up to monitor and promote freedoms in a number of African countries. The organization has worked to promote policies and legislation that enhance freedom of expression, human rights and access to information online including the publication of the annual State of The Internet in Africa report. They also host the annual Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa conference, which brings together different actors in the digital rights space in Africa.

In 2017, a South Sudanese Facebook page called "Aweil Eye" shared a post that linked to an article that claimed that President Salva Kiir had been shot dead. It was a fake story, but some people believed that there was a possibility of a military coup and this led to widespread panic. The President had to appear in public to counteract the fake story. This trend was famously given the name fake news following the 2016 US elections. **Fake news** is defined as "*false stories that appear to be news, spread on the internet or using other media, usually created to influence political views.*"

Historically fake news has been exacerbated by elections, even when before we used that word to refer to it. In the wake of the Cambridge Analytica scandal, it emerged that the data mining company played a role in elections in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. In Nigeria, a billionaire paid Cambridge Analytica \$2.8 million to dig up damaging information about then Presidential candidate Muhammadu Buhari as part of

an attack campaign. The emails included information about Buhari's health and medical records.

The fake news issue has brought about the need for public education on consumption of media. This is key so that the public is able to acquire skills that will help them consume media with skepticism which will protect them from being manipulated into believing fake stories. On the online media side, there has emerged an opportunity to introduce fact checking and verification to the craft. This is a tactic that has existed in traditional media for some time, but it was crucial to adapt it to the age of the Internet. Organizations such as Pesa Check from Kenya and Stop Intox from Cameroon have been involved in helping debunk fake news and conspiracy theories on the Internet. Others, like UNESCO, Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE), Bloggers of Zambia and #defyhatenow are involved in training online content creators in fact checking and verification. This has had the net effect of helping reduce the spread of fake news since the online content creators now have the skills to quickly verify news. However, all citizens engaging online need to consume and share media content with the same level of critical reading.



## WHAT IS THE WAY FORWARD?

There's a running joke in human rights circles that African Governments and leaders are in the same WhatsApp group and that's why they tend to implement similar policies and laws.

There's an opportunity for actors in the digital rights space operating in different countries on the continent to do the same thing as their Governments. This would mean that they would pick digital activism tactics that work in one country and then implement them in another country that has similar challenges.

This is important because different actors can be able to share their skills and experiences so that others can learn from them and hopefully employ key learnings from the interaction in their own countries.



## THE BLOGGERS ASSOCIATION OF KENYA - BAKE

The Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE) is a community association of Kenyan bloggers and content creators that promotes online content creation & free expression in Kenya.

BAKE connects blogs in Kenya from all areas of interest and expertise. It was formed in 2011 after a series of discussions concerning content creation and consumption of online content in Kenya. BAKE is at the forefront of everything digital in Kenya. BAKE is a pioneer in the digital rights space in Africa, they have carry out several activities including BAKE Awards which recognizes the exceptional efforts of various content creators, Digital Trainings where they training new content creators and offer refresher courses to seasoned content creators, Kenya Monitor Site and the iFreedoms Kenya a program that promotes human rights and media rights online in Kenya. It does so through documentation of important occurrences (threats, events, legislation, important cases) online and on our annual report, public interest litigation, policy intervention, advocacy and training. iFreedoms Kenya amplifies the voices of citizen journalists on freedom of expression and engagement, utilize art and culture to promote internet rights (artivism) and continue to document threats to access, privacy and security online in East Africa.

### THE EVOLUTION OF BLOGGING

By Lolyne

Blogging has come a long way from when the first post was uploaded online. Today, they have become such an integral part of our lives, both personally and in business. Almost everything you read online today comes from blogs. This is from how to repair a phone, to writing a professional CV, cooking spaghetti and even how to kiss. The blogging we know now is not as it was ten, fifteen years ago. Just like human

beings, blogging is also evolving. The art of writing, the styles and even uses of blogs are changing. Here is a timeline of how blogging started and the changes that have made it possible for us to enjoy them today. <https://www.blog.bake.co.ke/2019/12/04/the-evolution-of-blogging/>

## **BAKE SUBMITS MEMORANDUM TO HAVE BLOGGERS AND SOCIAL MEDIA REGISTRATION BILL SHELVED**

**By Lolyne**

The Public Participation forum on the proposed provisions on blogging and social media in the Kenya Information and Communications (Amendment) Bill KICA was held on Monday at the County hall, where the public had the opportunity to submit their representations to the Kenya National Assembly Information, Communication and Innovation Committee.

The bill in contention, sponsored by Malva MP, Moses Injendi, seeks to amend the KICA act to provide for stringent measures in social media regulation. The bill requires all Facebook and WhatsApp group administrators to be registered with the Communication Authority (CA) before setting up any Social media groups. The Bill also proposes that users and group administrators who allow offending content on their social media platforms to be jailed for a term not exceeding one year or face a ksh200,000 fine.

Chairman of the committee William Kisang's opinion on the proposed KICA bill was that it goes against the freedom of speech, privacy, and freedom of belief and opinion as enshrined in the constitution. Nominated MP Godfrey Osofi also added that the bill was unconstitutional because it violated the right to expression and privacy. "The committee would be headed in the wrong direction discussing something that is already unconstitutional," he said.

Organisations, which include Bloggers Association of Kenya (BAKE), Kenya union of journalists (KUJ), Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANET), Amnesty International (AI-Kenya) and Lawyers hub Kenya, jointly called for the rejection of the bill in its totality.

BAKE And KUJ jointly submitted a memorandum on the KICA Amendment Bill 2019 terming it "unconstitutional and untenable." In our submission, we reiterated that Article 19 (3) of the Constitution recognizes that the Rights and Fundamental Freedoms are not granted by the state. The state does not have the right to interfere with or issue a prescription as to how a right should be enjoyed.

“ It is evident from the provisions of the Bill that the intended regulation is to introduce registration and licensing regime for social media platforms and blogs. ”

Further, the state seeks to collect and remit data from the users of the platforms to the state whenever so required by the state. Social media platforms and blogs are civilian public debate forums within cyberspace. They are interactive and access to them is voluntary and only available only on request/demand.

As such in the 21st Century, any attempt at interference with social media goes to the heart of freedom of expression. Any regulation of the social media and the blogosphere, therefore, must comply with the Constitution, and consideration must be borne that freedom of expression goes to the heart of Democracy, good governance and Human Rights," said the memorandum.

KICTANET in their submission also termed the bill unconstitutional and emphasized its withdrawal as it "Has devastating ramifications on the sovereignty of the people, the supremacy of the constitution and democracy as a whole."

"KICA is not supposed to deal with content, it's supposed to deal with systems. This is a retrogressive bill that undermines freedom of speech and thought," said Demas Kiprono, Constitutional & Human Rights Lawyer at Amnesty International Kenya.

Mr Kisang concluded that they would do a report to the national assembly, urging them to throw the Bill out. He, however, cautioned the public on the use of social media and urged them to be responsible in their undertakings.

<https://www.blog.bake.co.ke/2019/11/14/bake-submits-memorandum-to-have-bloggers-and-social-media-registration-bill-shelved/>

*Documents:*

**KICA Amendment Bill – KUJ & BAKE Memorandum  
Kenya Information and Communications (Amendment) Bill, 2019**

## **YOUR DATA IS AN ADVERTISERS PRECIOUS STONE**

**By Vallary Lukhanyu**

Applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook and the mushrooming money lending applications among others have made it compulsory to access the users' data. This includes users personal photos, contacts, location, messages and background data.

In the case of these applications, where do users' information go? Distressed users have on various occasions re-counted on social media pages about incidences that have occurred to them after sharing their data to application developers who might have colluded with fraudsters. The scammers end up siphoning them off their valuables, especially money. Other users narrated that, their contacts were often reached out because they did not meet their loan deadlines as agreed by the lenders.

Recently, in a social media survey in one of the notorious Facebook groups in Kenya, several users narrated their experiences with a loan application that called their friends, colleagues and relatives once they failed to repay their loans on time an indication of a data breach. When installing these applications, customers are assured of secure data. Once access is given, some companies breach this agreement and then subject customers to hackers and other insecurity threats.

Studying from an article by medium.com on data privacy. Strangely, there are legitimate reasons why these applications compulsorily ask for access to data. Most of this data is sold to advertisement companies to entice us with their products. Yet as they never disclose it to the religiously honest users.

Apparently, location data is a gem for advertisers. It provides a full context of our habits on and offline. For instance, if you love online shopping, or food bars the advertisers are able to understand your trends and then in future, they will use this data to market coffee to you. Unbelievably, we have been sponsoring tons of advertising agencies with our data. The same data we ignorantly let access to application manufacturers without a second thought.

Research from Money.com and Facebook

<https://www.blog.bake.co.ke/2019/08/20/do-you-know-your-data-is-an-advertisers-precious-stone/>

### **ABC Cameroon**

Association of Bloggers Cameroon

L'Association des Blogueurs du Cameroun, en abrégé « ABC », est née de la volonté des blogueurs camerounais de se réunir en une seule et même communauté. C'est ainsi qu'une assemblée générale constitutive s'est tenue à Yaoundé, les 12 et 13 août 2017. A l'issue des travaux, les statuts et règlement intérieur de l'association ont été adoptés et le premier bureau exécutif a été élu. <http://blogueurs.cm/> L'ABC et #defyhatenow Cameroon forment sur la vérification des faits en ligne

<http://blogueurs.cm/labc-et-defyhatenow-cameroon-forment-sur-la-verification-des-faits-en-ligne/>



## NEXT STEPS: THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA AND JOURNALISTS

The media when properly used can help in promoting human rights, combat violence, building trust and reconciliation of conflicting groups but when wrongly used, it can also inflame tension, intolerance and hatred. The Cameroon media have great impact on the current crises in the country and can still greatly contribute in pushing back against the dissemination of hate messages online and offline.

- The media should create an environment where persuasion could be developed. That is operating not as an actor that reports stories of hate but addresses them critically, and raises awareness and advocates for diversity. In doing this, it is important for the media to be kept independent from the Government.
- Journalists should leverage on the availability of television and TV programs to produce content on alternative and new narratives to be broadcast along national and international Medias.
- Establish Monitoring and Evaluation platforms in newsrooms to monitor hate speech trends, compile reports and bring to the attention of key institutions and Civil Society.
- Train journalists on conflict sensitive reporting.
- Organize a rigorous nationwide education campaign targeted at various groups ranging from students, traders and market women, public sector employees, traditional and religious organizations as well security institutions. The education campaign must include messages that promote harmony among different groups within the country. This campaign should make use of all communication mediums online and offline as well as enable the creation of contents through music, comedy, poetry, films, art work, etc.
- The media can also be a venue for public debate, which is necessary in a democratic society. Such debates can have a positive effect for relieving tension and create a balance between the interests of the majority and minority groups in society.
- The media should engage in the battle against prejudice and its consequences; opposing prejudice instead of spreading it.
- Encourage the media to publicise positive stories of religious and secular actors who have countered violent extremist narratives, as well as news and information about initiatives aimed at enhancing respect and peaceful coexistence.

*Recommendations from Hate Speech and Violent Conflict in Cameroon Report by Local Youth Corner Cameroon, 2019*

# 5

## Peacebuilding & Technology



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## #DEFYHATENOW | CHAPTER 5

# PEACEBUILDING & TECHNOLOGY



## PEACEBUILDING AND TECHNOLOGY

### #TECH4PEACE

#PeaceTech, #Tech4peace are terms that have been widely used in a variety of contexts and places, but mainly used to refer to the use of people and communities to technology in the processes of peacebuilding. This why a peace tech is another tool, that might otherwise be used to ignite conflicts, which can be instead pro-actively used in peacemaking.

“PeaceTech’s point of departure is that technology, per say, is not inherently good or bad, powerful or not; it is people’s decisions that have the power to design, use or misuse technology – and influence where it leads us” (Berns, 2015:3)

### #PeaceHackCamp South Sudan



The first **#PeaceHackCamp** was held from Nov 30 to Dec 2, 2015 in Juba, South Sudan; Free and open to the public.

As hacking means finding new and innovative solutions; in hacking peace, where peace is elusive, we want to help re-open the window of opportunity in the world’s newest country for a peaceful, just and prosperous future!

The South Sudan **#PeaceHackCamp** is an inter-communal peace-building project aimed at media literacy training and networking with people from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, literacy levels, including those with informal education, self-taught skills and people displaced by conflict.

Initiated by a group of dedicated South Sudanese students, IT and media professionals, **#PeaceHackCamp** addressed how to make and share media, not just consume it, while introducing and creating public awareness on the benefits Open ICTs, Innovation and Open Educational Resources (OERs) as vehicles for peacebuilding, development and national reconciliation.

As a year-long program that included IT and video production training, **#PeaceHackCamp** concluded with South Sudan’s first international yet community developed technology, social activism and peacebuilding event, launching a series of events that have since taken place in Colombia and Egypt. This was a unique opportunity for people in South Sudan to network with peer innovation communities from other African innovation labs, experience hands-on knowledge sharing and have the chance to exchange good practices from local peacebuilding initiatives.

Bringing together peacebuilders, tech innovators and open culture advocates from across South Sudan and beyond to hack, code, make and collaborate for peace!

## #ASKnet = Access to Skills and Knowledge Network

#ASKnet provides access to skills and knowledge to empower youth, address community challenges and transform cultural patterns.

#ASKnet (Access to Skills and Knowledge Network) is a capacity building and hub development program linking six community based youth-led innovation hubs in South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya. The #ASKnet community aims to build a sustainable network of trainers and empowered individuals, to address specific challenges their communities are facing and transform cultural patterns that fuel conflict and inequality. It does so by providing youth access to skills and knowledge through Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops in themes including open source hardware and software using the #ASKotec, entrepreneurship, media production, gender equality awareness, trauma healing and financial literacy.

The program started in 2015 with the implementation of a community-based media training centre, the Juba Open Knowledge and Innovation Hub (**jHUB**), in South Sudan. With Juba under siege when the program was to begin in 2016, the jHUB community members scattered in numerous locations, with some of the group becoming refugees in northern Uganda and other regions in South Sudan. The program has since evolved into a mesh network of small nodes and local initiatives, becoming #ASKnet, the Access to Skills and Knowledge Network.

[https://openculture.agency/asknet\\_-\\_access-to-skills-and-knowledge-network/](https://openculture.agency/asknet_-_access-to-skills-and-knowledge-network/)

## Power of One! The Story of #South Sudan And The #Hyracbox

The story of #Hyracbox in South Sudan has a very simple genesis, with one of our partners #Askotec ensuring that our box was part of the kit, what unfolds later is a beautiful story, one that tells tales of #ThePowerOfOne, one that speaks for a community in need of resources. A story about the benefits that the box can provide, but more so, a story about #People, #Access.

### South Sudan and the Hyrac Box

<https://medium.com/@hyractech/power-of-one-the-story-of-south-sudan-and-the-hyracbox-39978c6c3374>

### Hyrac Box

<https://www.hyracbox.com/>



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# MAKERSPACES ROLE IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS

By Marthe Francine Nkolo Ateba

The Maker movement reflects the trend of Do It Yourself (DIY), where individuals or communities are tinkering and doing digital manufacturing. With varied applications in everyday life, research and industry, this movement is taking place in physical environments called makerspaces; a generic term for technological spaces where open innovation emerges. It includes FabLabs, Hubs, accelerators, incubators, Hackerspaces, Biohackerspaces, Living Labs, Coworking space, etc.

Makerspaces are generally equipped with digital machines (3D printers, laser cutters, etc.), computers, electronics kits as well as sewing machines, etc. Beyond this physical dimension, makerspaces are characterized by their community dimension; making them spaces where people with common interests (regardless of a given field) can meet, socialize, collaborate or discuss common themes and problems. The maker movement appears as a pillar of citizen science which is defined as: "the involvement of the public in scientific research - whether community-driven research or global investigations". It is no secret that the Maker movement has great potential for Africa. In terms of education, Makerspaces would improve the quality of education (Okpala 2016). On the economic front, Friederici (2016) argues that makerspaces have become a widespread form of support for technological entrepreneurship in Africa. On

the socio-political level, Ron Eglash and Ellen Foster (2017) argue that the maker movement offers anchors for Africa to build a sustainable and more egalitarian future. Ekekwe (2015) believes that the maker movement can play an important role in empowering African citizens.

In light of the above, it is clear that the makers' movement set the ground for more open societies, by including open citizen participation in policy-making. The maker's movement can be considered as a tool in the hands of policy-makers because it can promote an interactive communication between citizens and their authorities. In that sense, it ensures that greater account is taken of the needs and skills of the populations.

From there, my question is: what roles can the maker movement play in the current context of Cameroon? Where the Anglophone crisis is going on since October 2016.

Indeed, according to United Nations estimations, more than 437 000 people are currently displaced in Cameroon. More than 1800 persons have been killed in English-speaking regions of North-west and South-west Cameroon, and this number continues to increase. Due to this unsecured situation, many of the internally deported persons (IDPs) have taken refuge in big cities like Yaoundé, Douala and Bafoussam. How can the makerspaces operate as tools for peace building in Cameroon? To answer this question, I will study the MboaLab in Cameroon.



Credit: Felix Fokoua

## **CASE STUDY: MboaLab as a peacebuilder center in Cameroon**

### **Peacebuilder Maker Space Design Sprint**

Mboalab 27th-28th December 2019

The global objective of the Peacebuilder Maker Space Design Sprint is to empower citizens by creating strategies to directly tackle hate speech as a means of building trust among citizens and conflicting partners in Cameroon. The specific aim is to develop community based resource centres and tools on how a Peacebuilder Maker Space could look and function.

MboaLab is a community laboratory for social innovation, community-based education, collaboration and mediation. Located in Yaoundé, Cameroon, MboaLab is aligned with the same idea of FabLabs, which are places where spaces, machines, skills and knowledge can be freely shared to meet the needs of the community. Specifically, the MboaLab is working to:

- train communities in responsible use of social media to promote peace and identify disinformation and rumours;

- to bring people together, give them opportunities to share experiences and build their own future through open technologies;
- strengthen the concept of “vivre ensemble” “living-together” through Doing It Together (DIT).
- Since September 2019, MboaLab is recognized as a peacebuilder center; aiming to consolidate relationship between IDPs (from the Anglophone region) and Francophone Cameroonians, through activities related to DIY and making.
- How does the Mboalab dynamic of co-creation between IDPs and local communities contribute to peacebuilding in Cameroon?
- We are conducting a 6-month exploratory study as part of a project funded by the German Foreign Office. The methodology to be used will adopt a grounded theory approach (Strauss and al.1998).
- Data collection will be done through:
  - observation of activities taking place at MboaLab;
  - interviews and focus groups with IDPs attending activities at MboaLab;
  - storytelling.

The interviews and focus groups will be recorded; photos and videos will be taken. To care about ethics and privacy of attendees, all data collected will be anonymized before our qualitative analysis. The key expected outcomes are :

- document a framework for a workshop in making for peacebuilding;
- describe citizen science mechanisms leading to peacebuilding
- gather and handle data on IDPs skills and needs. So that they can be used by policymakers to know what their real needs are, and try to meet them.

During the ECSA2020 conference, I will present results of this research. We are confident that makerspaces like MboaLab can be considered a tool in the hands of policymakers, communities, and IDPs to create safe environments and best practices to promote a sustainable peace in Cameroon and Africa. Since a peaceful environment is a prerequisite for a prosperous nation and respect of human rights, this research fits with the sustainable development goals to achieve a better future for all.

Participants are members of associations: MboaLab, Jongo Hub, Association Baho, ICPH2SD. The participants came all over the country, even from North and South West regions: Michel Polly, based in Limbe (South West region), Mrs Makoudem, an expert in peace-building who works for "initiatives of change international," Félix Fokoua a young design artist of the West region, and all the MboaLab team.

Key words: **Peace building – Makerspaces – DIY – IDPs**



Irène EKOUTA, designer from association "Le pagne en Folie," based in Yaoundé. Coordinating the session on how best to attain the PeaceMaker Lab objectives. [Left Photo]

Thomas Mboa presents Mboalab and activities for training skills in the community. [Right Photo]

Credit: Stéphane FADANKA



## NATIONAL HACKATHON SERIES

Vilsquare, Abuja

<https://vilsquare.org/makershub/>

The National Hackathon Series to bridge boundaries across Nigerian communities. Technology | Peace Advocacy | Civic Engagement

In the last few decades, Nigeria has been plagued by several socio-cultural problems. These problems have not only taken a toll on her economy, but have managed to continuously strike at the very core of the Nation. From the incessant communal clashes in the south-west and middle belt; the issues with piracy and pipeline vandalism from the Niger-Delta Militants in the south-south; Boko Haram sponsored terrorism and insurgency in the north; the recent clamour for the actualisation of a Biafran Republic in the South-East; and, previously unimagined but fatal clashes between herdsmen and farmers across the country, the previously unified front that is Nigeria appears to be under immense pressure.

Based on these challenging scenarios, Vilsquare Makers' Hub in partnership with The Meluibe Empowerment Foundation has designed a Hackathon series aimed at contributing to creating an enabler platform for national cohesion and integration. The series themed "Building the Makers' Movement" brings together diverse community members to conceptualize, design, process and document technical solutions to local problems. The hackathons take place over a period of two years, beginning with each of the geo-political zones in Nigeria hosting the programme.

### **How Nigerian Youth are building a more inclusive society via Civic Technology**

Targeting data science and civic technology across Africa, Vilsquare has deployed mobile tech hubs in conflict and non-conflict areas (all geopolitical zones) in Nigeria.

At each of these mobile hubs, the team assembles diverse young (ages 18–30 years) humanitarian makers to build Open Source technology solutions that solve their community problems while enforcing national dialogue and social inclusion.

The Vilsquare team foresees the applicability of National Hackathon Series in other countries of sub-Saharan Africa where the methodology of the Hackathon can be transposed with the same or more impactful results. As an example, Cameroon is a country presenting many of the same features as Nigeria, and even more diverse.

### **Cameroon, a country with a big challenge of diversity and inclusion**

Located in Central Africa, Cameroon is one of the countries in the world with the highest cultural diversity: linguistic diversity (242 languages, each grouping several dialects still), ethnic diversity (about 40 ethnic groups subdivided into several subgroups each, distributed in the 3 main troupes of the Global North, the Global South and the Global West), religious diversity (laic state, the country shelters Christians of all faiths, Muslims, Animists, other obediences and free-thinkers).

Despite this linguistic fullness, the only national and official languages are French and English inherited from the double colonization by England and France. Despite the reunification of 2 Cameroon in 1972, the rough bilingualism gradually became the subject of many complaints from the English-speaking minority (North-West and South-West) to the French-speaking part (the 8 other regions).

Combined with the ethnic, linguistic and religious diversities that already set communities apart from each other, the demands of the English-speaking part have resurfaced in 2017, stronger with the demand for federalism or independence of the English-speaking regions, namely North-West and South-West. These demands rejected by the government have led to separatist movements and demonstrations that the government repressed by the deployment of the army throughout the English-speaking part: resulting in fierce clashes and conflict, causing the massive displacement of populations to neighbouring countries

and cities.

### Inspiring Cameroonian youth through national hackathons

Launching a “National Hackathon Series” in Cameroon rises as one solution to overcome digital rights violation and tribalism. The country recorded an internet shutdown of 230 days between January 2017 and March 2018, longest of those blocks having lasted 93 days: stoking regional unrest, brewing frustrations, and crippling a vibrant digital sector in Buea, known as “Silicon Mountain”. Internet shutdowns persisted in the pre-election period, with the spread of disinformation, and the wave of hate speech from one tribe to another.

With National Hackathon Series, citizens can create solutions to protect their digital rights and build an inclusive society to live in. Considering the results attained in Nigeria, such civic technology initiatives can help in solving real societal issues.

### Getting Cameroonian stakeholders on board

Vilsquare relies on the global context data and citizens of a given community to identify their own problems, needs and bring them to bear concrete solutions through the Hackathon. Young people between the ages of 18 and 35 are targeted to be carriers of change through technology. The Hackathon is an opportunity for them, as technology lovers, to create solutions to everyday’s hitches in their respective communities. The chosen theme is driven by the major outbreaks identified in a country or a community, and relates to one or more of the SDG’s targets.

### Launching hackathons everywhere in Africa

Hackathons are above all places of intercultural, interethnic, inter-linguistic meetings and exchanges. They therefore contribute to the discovery and understanding of each other. Working with each other on the same project leads to learning and to coming out with a better conception of the tribe, the ethnic group or the whole linguistic community that they represent.

Willing to support or join the movement, get in touch with the Vilsquare team!

<https://medium.com/@vilsquareglobalresources/this-is-how-nigerian-youth-is-building-a-more-inclusive-society-via-civic-technology-1c4efeb0ed53>



## CASE STUDY: KIRO’O GAMES CAMEROON

**A talk with Olivier Madiba of Kiro’o Games, who built the Aurion games series.**

By Kendi Gikunda



<http://kiroogames.com/>

## How has Kiro'o Games helped reshape the minds of young people with local narratives?

We have done it on two accounts: We included the content of the games which includes a narrative of the quest of whom you are as a person. In the Aurion games you gain strength from building yourself and your purpose in life.

We are creating a new game "the public service game" where the player is a leader in Africa and in this case it's specific to a politician. It was inspired by the corrupt practices in Cameroon. In the game you build social services for your people and that's how you proceed to the next level. We aim to create disgust of corruption, this helps people think about how your behavior and actions impact on you and your society.

We have also included a portion of the games that makes you believe in yourself with the skill set you possess.



We need to learn more about our history the things we can do with what we have. **We have a chance to innovate and create something accommodating to Africa:**

- Can we go past Capitalism?
- Is there a way we can create an income within our communities without taking advantage of our people?
- Can we go past our different languages especially in Cameroon as an English and French speaking country?
- How do you change the world if you are the weakest?
- How do you create change even if you have the least amount of wealth?
- How do you define your path and choose your allies while still remaining diplomatic?

## How best can Kiro'o Games be used to preach peace and solidarity?

They give young people who are idle busy from engaging in hate speech online as they would rather play these games than go out wandering which could lead to misconduct and delinquency which is one of the bases of the crisis. We are also building a platform that will help people raise funds and support themselves. We have tried to maintain an open dialogue starting from our office. We have Francophone and Anglophone speakers working with us. All our games and comic books are bilingual that includes our website.

I wish we had more money to translate everything we create but sometimes we have very little funds that we hold games longer before we release them as they are in just one language. We are a startup so we get cash strapped on occasion but we try to give back through talks and open days. It's very capital intensive so we take on young people as interns for like a week and we always hope that inspires them in their journeys.

**Does Kiro'o Games cut across communities or are the games reserved for a particular group?**

They cut across communities but it depends on who gets on the platforms to pay them. I can mostly speak on the people we hire as we have control of that. We are funded by Cameroonians who invest in our organisation, and that way we can keep afloat.

### **What is the engagement rate of users/players and how popular are Kiro'o Games?**

Aurion is popular in and out of Cameroon. We want to reach more people in Cameroon through smartphone games, PC games are not as popular in Cameroon.

### **Where are you based and how easy is it to access you? Online, Offline?**

All our games are available on the Aurion website. We are making the smartphone version of the politician game. It is the most awaited game in Cameroon. We are working on a game on play store.

<http://aurionthegame.com/>

### **What are the challenges you have faced and how have you weathered them?**

We have had talk of games make kids lazy but it is not the case. We have been trying to share the positives with the parents by involving them. We struggle with funding so as we still do not make a profit from our games yet. We get a lot of publicity through the Ministry of Telecommunications and local Cameroonian investors.

### **Is there anything you would do differently?**

For the start and how much we struggled not really, we were broke and naïve. All the naivete we had then helped us take risks we cannot be able to do now. There is more at stake now, we have to take more calculated steps. When we started as a leader we should have done more, to empower our people. We should have been more prepared business wise and cash wise. We had very little money that ran out very fast and people were not motivated and we almost gave up just before we launched. We lacked the drive to be excellent because of lack of money, I think we could have prepared ourselves better mentally.

The illusion that we would become millionaires after the release of the first game!

Motivation comes from anywhere, and when we share stuff on online it shows the world our work. I have received direct messages just when I was about to give up, from young people telling me how the game motivates them. PC games and Smartphone games are more than just hitting keys on your machine. You learn and teach people while at it.

We pride ourselves in the fact that we are building a community more focused on people and our culture. We aim to build the most interesting games, cartoons and comic books in Africa.





Credit: Georges PONDY & Felix FOKOUA

### **Aurion: Legacy of the Kori-Odan**

Aurion: Legacy of the Kori-Odan is a 2D African Fantasy Action-RPG which seeks to innovate in this genre. The dynamic gameplay partly inspired by the old school “Tales of” series, focuses on 2D real-time combat sequences while the narration and its environment both draw deeply from African culture, myths and lores.

#### **Who am I ? What is my place in this world ?**

There comes a time when everyone asks himself these questions. On Aurioma, an energy called Aurion reacts only to those who seek answers, connecting them to their ancestors.

In the city of Zama, the king and queen, Enzo and Erine Kori-Odan, are crowned on their wedding day. But this happy day will be the beginning of their struggles, their trials and their journey to find the true meaning of the Kori-Odan Heritage.

#### **How do you play Aurion?**

In the game, you will take the role of Enzo Kori-Odan, the Prince of Zama who suffers a coup d'état from his brother-in-law on the day of his coronation and marriage with Erine Evou. Through thrilling execution, combo-heavy action sequences, Erine and Enzo will redefine their bond, rescue the land from its villains, and restore their legacy. Luckily, Enzo can call on the Aurion, a powerful collective energy channelled from ancestors that can unlock devastating fighting abilities and combos to help him beat his foes.

The comic book takes the story of the video game, for a non-gamer audience or gamers who want to discover more in depth, the adventure of King Enzo and Queen Erine.

Aurion's Story: The Kori-Odan Legacy is based on the African Fantasy role-playing game. The first Cameroonian video game has been praised by international critics for its captivating and inspiring screenplay.

**“A Video Game That Transports Players to A Different Kind of Africa”**  
EVAN NARCISSE, KOTAKU

**“Aurion: Legacy of the Kori-Odan has deep, intricate combat for a game whose story focuses on togetherness and community.”**  
JOEL COUTURE, INDIEGAMES

**“It's billed as an “African-fantasy Action RPG”, putting a lot of emphasis on combos and combat while also having a setting based on African mythology.”**  
JOE PARLOCK, DESTRUCTOID

**CONTACTS & SOCIAL****aurionthegame.com****contact@kiroogames.com**twitter: **@Aurionthegame**fb: **AurionheritageDesKoriordan**youtube: **Kirootales**Instagram: **Aurion\_lko****PEACETECH EXAMPLES****Citizen Evidence Lab, Amnesty International****<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/12/amnesty-international-updates-citizen-evidence-lab-for-cutting-edge-open-source-human-rights-investigations/>**

Citizen evidence” includes images, videos, satellite imagery, large data sets and other material showing a potential human rights violation that has been collected by someone other than an official human rights investigator.

Frequently shared publicly through social media networks like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, this sort of documentation often exposes in great detail crimes that might have otherwise gone unnoticed. Although access and technology for gathering citizen evidence are constantly improving, there is also more disinformation that requires multiple data sources or tools to debunk.

**i4policy****<http://i4policy.org/>**

Shape Inclusive African Innovation Policies

Join us as we co-create the next African Innovation Policy Manifesto. i4Policy builds tools, methodologies and training to support open source technology development in public policy consultation and co-creation.

**Internews****<https://internews.org/>**

Internews is an international nonprofit organization that empowers people worldwide with the trustworthy, high-quality news and information they need to make informed decisions, participate in their communities, and hold power to account. Internews’ work counters disinformation on multiple fronts to make sure that people get the accurate information they need to make good decisions. Internews has supported the development of thousands of media outlets worldwide, including radio and television stations, newspapers, mobile news networks, and online news sites, together with local partners.

**THE SENTINEL PROJECT: HATEBASE****<https://thesentinelproject.org/projects>**

Hatebase is the world’s largest online repository of structured multilingual, usage-based hate speech. It is an attempt to create a repository of words and phrases that researchers can use to detect the early stages of genocide and remains in active development.

Hatebase offers two main features: a Wikipedia-like interface which allows users to classify and record location-specific “sightings”, and an authenticating API that allows developers to mesh Hatebase data with other tools for genocide prevention.

**PeaceTech Lab**<http://www.peacetechlab.org>

PeaceTech Lab works to reduce violent conflict using technology, media, and data to accelerate and scale peacebuilding efforts. PeaceTech Lab East Africa has developed tools to limit media incitement to violence as well as to monitor and counter hate speech also in collaboration with #defyhatenow, including reports and the PeaceTech Lab Social Media and Conflict in South Sudan, a Lexicon of Hate Speech Terms.

**Waayama Early Warning Software**<http://www.earlywarningnigeria.org/>

Waayama Early Warning Software (Nigeria) provides local communities with a cloud-based early warning platform to systematically collect, analyze and communicate quantitative and qualitative information on current or impending threats to human security. Waayama is intended for micro-level or community-based early warning, with the goal to foster successful early response to prevent violence.



## WIKIPEDIA FOR PEACE

#defyhatenow initiative trained students from the University of Juba on writing and editing information about South Sudan on Wikipedia online global encyclopedia, November 2017.



Credit: Wikipedia for Peace, University of Juba, South Sudan, 2017

**Objectives:**

- Empowering South Sudanese to have a global voice in national narratives and knowledge in the quest for lasting peace.
- Generating more knowledge about other people-to-people peacebuilding issues.
- Initiate a sustainable movement of South Sudanese Wikipedia writers/editors.

**Why Wikipedia?**

South Sudan is underrepresented at Wikipedia, the world's largest online encyclopedia. There are hardly 1,500 articles about South Sudanese subjects and most of them are just stubs, since even entries about many major towns and states only feature a couple of lines. While Wikipedia is one of the most used and

visited websites, almost no content about South Sudan has been generated inside the country itself. Instead, most information about South Sudan has been created by outsiders.

#defyhatenow worked with the student run #kefkum initiative to collaboratively edit, starting with a critical review of Wunlit Peace conference to create a comprehensive article on Wikipedia.

### **Wunlit Peace Conference**

As an example from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wunlit\\_Peace\\_Conference](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wunlit_Peace_Conference)

# 6

## Identity & Context



## 06 IDENTITY & CONTEXT

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## #DEFYHATENOW | CHAPTER 6

# IDENTITY & CONTEXT



## ROLE OF MEANINGFUL INTER-GROUP DIALOGUE

Sustained and effective dialogue between distinct groups, in particular between communities of different religions or beliefs, can serve an effective preventative measure, by achieving the alleviation of tensions or suspicion between groups.

A lack of meaningful inter-group communication, and the isolation and insularity of which this is a symptom, is often identified as a significant contributing factor to inter-group tensions, where 'hate speech' is more prevalent, and incitement to violence, hostility or discrimination more likely.

This may be particularly effective in contexts where there is a history of inter-group tensions escalating into incitement of, or actual, incidents of violence and discrimination. However, in order to be effective, dialogue must provide the spaces for a genuine, rather than symbolic, exchange of views, and enable the discussion of differences and disagreements. Dialogue must also be inclusive, allowing for community representation beyond "traditional" leaders and especially bringing the voices of women, girls, youth and displaced/minority communities to the forefront.

Informal exchanges between communities, for example in the context of sports or cultural exchanges, or designed to address practical issues of common concern, can also prove to be important trust- and relationship-building exercises. The impact of inter-group dialogue and communication initiatives can be enhanced where they receive public support from government and policy makers and religious leaders.

Outside the context of formal or informal "dialogues", representative of different communities, in particular religious leaders and other community leaders, should be empowered to speak out in response to intolerance and discrimination. This is particularly important where proponents of intolerance and discrimination portray themselves as representative of, or acting on behalf of, specific communities or interest groups. Religious and community leaders are well placed not only to refute these claims of representation, but also to substantively engage with and challenge an individual's position, and thus offer a persuasive counter-narrative.

### Prejudice Awareness

Societies across the globe are comprised of countries with different ethnic, religious or cultural groups and sometimes these groups feel like they do not fit together. This may be due to historical, colonial legacy or more recent events. This leads to tension which in turn may lead to conflicts.

Identity based conflicts are hard to manage as identities are complex. We are often aware of the aspects of our identities that are targeted by a dominant group in society. We are hence predisposed to be prejudiced and hold biases towards groups of people we haven't interacted with beyond a certain level. Our identities are not static, we negotiate them on a daily basis. Our identities as a member of a group can be challenged or threatened at the individual level, in a one - on - one interaction with a member of the dominant group just as easily as the entire group we belong to, can be challenged or threatened at the national or international level.

The reason why we need to learn about identity and be aware of prejudices is to help us manage our differences and emerging conflicts. Being aware of your own identity, understanding what this identity means to you and learning how to accept others' identity are essential components of conflict prevention and significant considerations when managing conflicts.

In the Nature of Prejudice, Gordon Allport (1958) observes that prejudice can be seen as a series of increasingly more serious actions ranging from simple acts of bias to avoidance, exclusion, physical violence and 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 it is important for individuals to address seemingly harmless acts of bias when they occur.

### General Assumptions Regarding Prejudice (Cotton, 1993)

- Prejudice is learned and can be unlearned
- An effective method of addressing prejudice is to focus on the self and then to explore similarities and differences between groups
- People who feel good about themselves do not need to denigrate others
- Facts alone do not lead to improved intergroup relations. This requires education focusing on cooperative learning and critical thinking.

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## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Who am I?

How do you identify yourself?

Who are we?

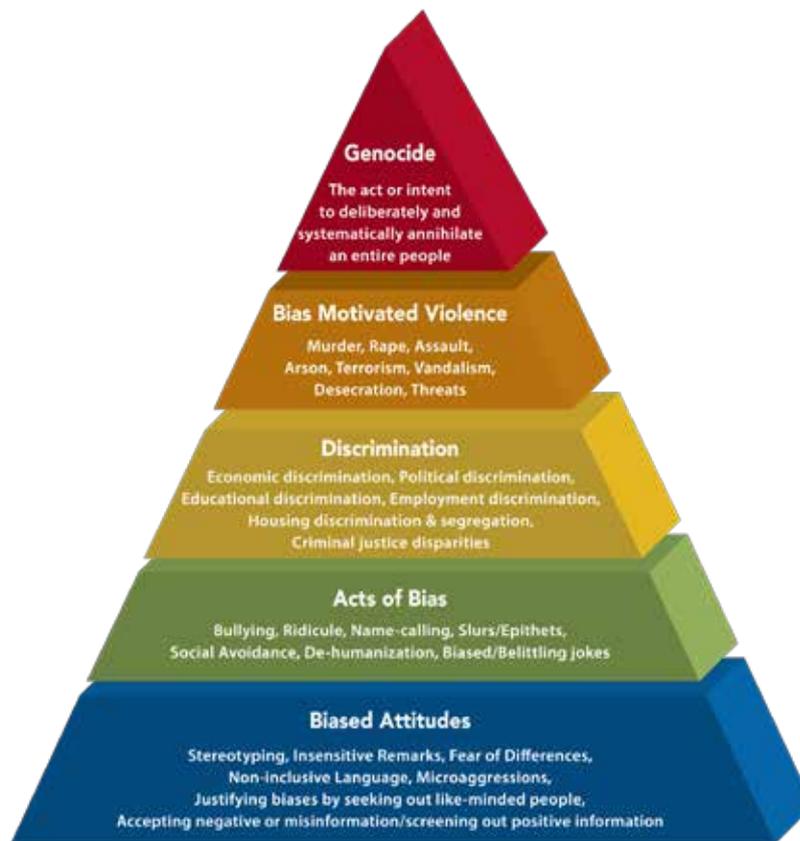
- How would you describe your cultural background and upbringing?
- How do you identify yourself? (age, tribe, race, political, religion, gender?)
- What values and traditions were important to your family and community groups?
- What are the benefits and challenges to identifying with a certain group?
- Examine key aspects of your identity in relation to environment, circumstance & experience
- Layers of identity: Broader perspective vs personal perspective
- Communal/tribe/political/religious/professional identities - blurred across various lines

⚡

## PYRAMID OF HATE

The Pyramid shows biased behaviors, growing in complexity from the bottom to the top. Although the behaviors at each level negatively impact individuals and groups, as one moves up the pyramid, the behaviors have more life-threatening consequences. Like a pyramid, the upper levels are supported by the lower levels. If people or institutions treat behaviors on the lower levels as being acceptable or “normal,”

it results in the behaviors at the next level becoming more accepted. In response to the questions of the world community about where the hate of genocide comes from, the Pyramid of Hate demonstrates that the hate of genocide is built upon the acceptance of behaviors described in the lower levels of the pyramid.



## MISTAKEN IDENTITIES PODCAST

British-born, Ghanaian-American philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah, explores confusions of identity through an examination of four central kinds of identity - creed, country, colour and culture. He argues against a mythical, romantic view of nationhood, saying instead it should rest on a commitment to shared values.

Listen to the programs on the accompanying USB key.

**CREED:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07z43ds>

**COUNTRY:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07zz5mf>

**COLOUR:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b080t63w>

**CULTURE:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0811kkj>

**BBC Reith Lectures: Mistaken Identities 2016**

Philosopher and cultural theorist Kwame Anthony Appiah



## THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Religious leaders have a strong potential to influence the lives and behaviour of those who follow their faith and share their beliefs. When they speak out, their messages can have wide ranging impact. Traditional and Religious leaders have an important role to play by speaking out against hate speech and ethnically motivated violence.

- Spreading messages of peace, tolerance, acceptance and mutual respect and by taking action to reduce tensions between communities.
- Disseminating positive and alternative speech online and offline; ensure that counter and alternative messages are disseminated in local languages, including in local dialects.
- Issuing and circulating reports of religious statements and decrees by religious leaders and authorities denouncing incitement and/or offering alternative messages.
- Organising community level initiatives such as „cultural weeks‘ and form rapid response networks. Disseminate messages in various forms, including through press conferences, press statements, blogs, videos, films, music and visual art.
- Building robust multi-faith social action campaigns to prevent and curb incitement to violence. Ensure campaign leaders are diverse faith actors (women, young people, and people of different professions).
- Disseminate information about activities aimed at alternative narratives.
- Engage youth, including through inter-religious justice-focused initiatives, in tackling injustice in a constructive way.
- Listen to and address the grievances of youths, even when what they say is shocking or controversial.
- Advocate with state institutions and the private sector on the importance of providing youth with economic opportunities and vocational training.
- Identifying and training “youth ambassadors” to become dedicated actors and peer-educators in countering radicalization and violent extremism.



## SOCIAL IDENTITY WHEEL

The Social Identity Wheel is an activity that encourages students to identify and reflect on the various ways they identify socially, how those identities become visible or more keenly felt at different times, and how those identities impact the ways others perceive or treat them.

The worksheet prompts students to fill in various social identities (such as race, gender, sex, ability disability, sexual orientation, etc.) and further categorize those identities based on which matter most in their self-perception and which matter most in others' perception of them. The wheels can be used as a prompt for small or large group discussion or reflective writing on identity.

### Social Identity Wheel (adapted from “Voices of Discovery”)

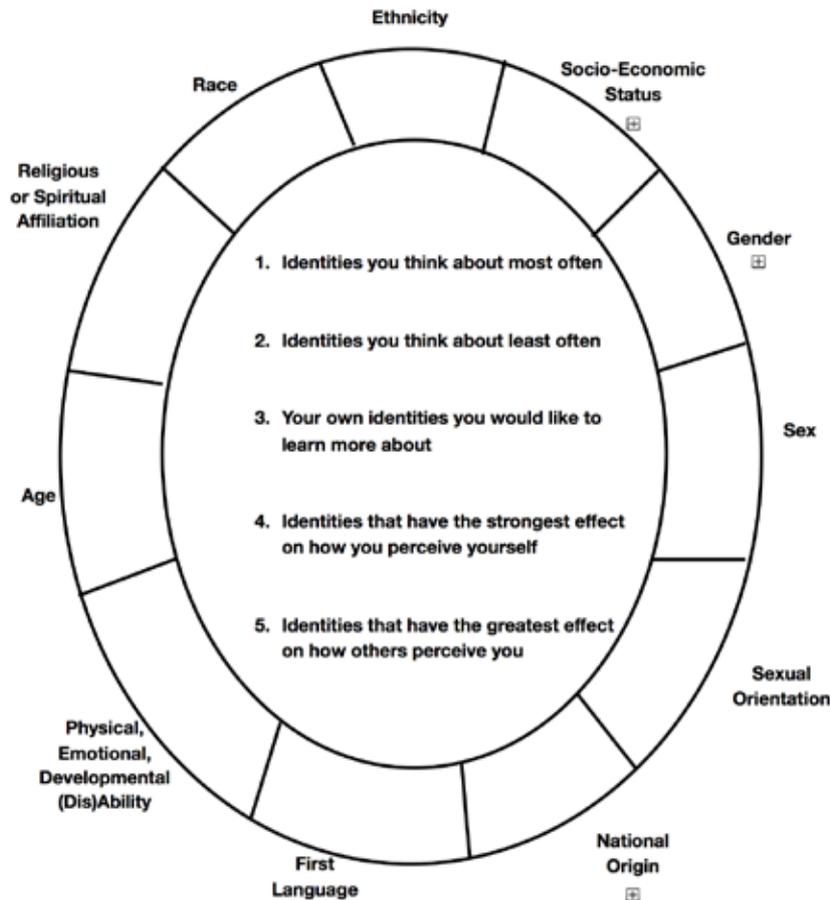
**Image description:** The chart below features a circle that is separated into 11 sections.

**Each section is labeled:** (starting at the top and moving clockwise around the circle) ethnicity; socio-economic status; gender; sex; sexual orientation; national origin; first language; physical, emotional,

developmental (dis)ability; age; religious or spiritual affiliation; race.

**In the center of the circle, there are five numbered prompts:**

1. Identities you think about most often
2. Identities you think about least often
3. Your own identities you would like to know more about
4. Identities that have the strongest effect on how you perceive yourself
5. Identities that have the greatest effect on how others perceive you.



*Citations:* Adapted for use by the Program on Intergroup Relations and the Spectrum Center, University of Michigan. Resource hosted by LSA Inclusive Teaching Initiative, University of Michigan <http://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching/>



## CYCLE OF SOCIALIZATION

The Cycle of Socialization helps us understand the way in which we are socialized to play certain roles, how we are affected by issues of oppression, and how we help maintain an oppressive system based upon power.

**The Cycle is comprised of 3 arrows, 3 circles, and a core center.**

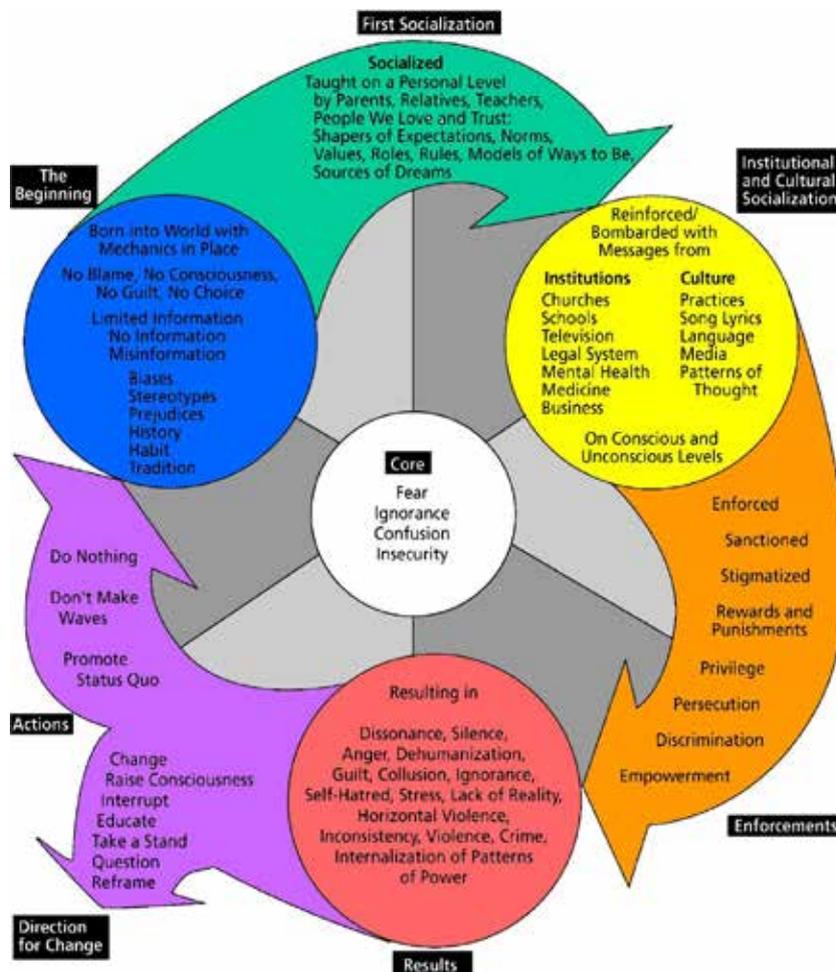


Diagram: Cycle of Socialization, Developed by Bobbie Harro (2008)

**Each of these components represents the following:**

1. The beginning of the cycle, depicted by the 1st circle, represents the situation into which we were born. We have no control over this. We are also born without bias, assumptions, or questions. We are either “lucky” to be born into a privileged situation or “unlucky” to be born into an underprivileged situation.
2. The 1st arrow represents the fact that our socialization process begins immediately. We are given a pink blanket if we are a girl or a blue one if we are a boy. The rules and norms are already in place and we subtly (and in not so subtly) are made aware of the rewards of conforming and the consequences of rebelling.
3. The second circle represents the institutions that help shape our views and beliefs, and help instill within us prejudice or acceptance.
4. The second arrow represents the way in which the instilling of ideas, beliefs, and behaviors reinforce the cycle of oppression. Behaving differently is not as simple as most of us think. We are rewarded for good behavior – conforming to the norms and standards. By the same token, we are punished for bad behavior – questioning or rebelling against oppressive societal norms.
5. The third circle represents the devastating result upon all of us that this self-perpetuated cycle of oppression produces.
6. The final arrow represents a point at which we all arrive – the results of the cycle. We are forced to make a decision, even if that decision is to do nothing. Doing nothing is the easier choice, especially for those

who benefit from the perpetuation of the cycle: we are all victims of the cycle and we are all hurt by it. Oppression hurts the oppressed and the oppressor.

7. And finally, it is the wheel that turns or enables any cycle. At the center or core of the cycle of socialization are fear, misunderstanding, insecurity, confusion, etc.

This handout offers a diagrammatic representation of how social identities such as race, gender, sexuality, and class are constructed and reinforced by socio-cultural interactions and context. It prompts students to reflectively engage with aspects of their own identities and identities they learned about but don't share to consider how their understanding of identities is enforced and how they reinforce or challenge the socio-cultural construction of identities. The activity includes questions for reflection and discussion that will encourage students to recognize the larger social context of identities and how identities are socially constructed and maintained.

The resulting systemic changes in structure, assumptions, philosophy, rules and roles can start with each individual and combine to work through the interrelated components of society, building on each others progress and interpersonal change.

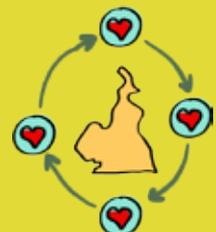
- **Waking up**
- **Getting Ready**
- **Reaching Out**
- **Building connection & community**
- **Coalescing**
- **Creating Change**
- **Maintaining**

Taking each of these areas in turn, draw a diagram with the group showing your perspective on how they relate to the physical and social environment you are living in. Think about what you can do next? Shifting attitudes and cultural norms takes time, even though there will inevitably be setbacks, stay positive, communicate with your networks, and remember to celebrate your achievements!



# 7

## Art 4 Peace: #Artivism



## 07 ART 4 PEACE: #ARTIVISM CONTENTS

STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL PEACEBUILDING

#DEFYHATENOW SOCIAL MEDIA #PEACEJAM

#DEFYHATENOW COMBATING HATE SPEECH THROUGH THE ARTS

ART FOR PEACE IN CAMEROON

FELIX FOKOUA & THE SHADOW GIRLS

FROM HATE SPEECH TO PEACEBUILDING: PRINZ JOHNSON

CASE STUDY: AMPLIFIER 'WE THE PEOPLE'

ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE

CASE STUDY: BEAUTIFUL RISING

ONDOA L'AFRIKAIN PRESENTS: THE PROMISE OF THE WIND

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## #DEFYHATENOW | CHAPTER 7

# ART 4 PEACE: #ARTIVISM

?

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

How does culture affect peacebuilding?

What can art contribute to lasting peace?

Why is #Artivism important to society?

- How do cultural activities contribute to peacebuilding?
- What are the common elements of these activities?
- How do they connect to your understanding of peace?
- Are they successful in realising the aim of building peace?
- Sketch your ideas to connect cultural activities with peacebuilding.



## STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL PEACEBUILDING

The following are some of the #defyhatenow activities that have taken place since 2015. These activities are developed around the concept of peacebuilding through grassroots community action. They are listed to offer examples and inspiration, in your own creative approach to peacebuilding.

### What is a social media #PeaceJam anyway?

A #PeaceJam is a relatively informal community oriented peacebuilding event, process, or activity where people, typically youth, cultural actors and anyone interested in peace and cultural dialogue get together to share their ideas, visions and hopes for the future - and to make new friends and connections. To “jam” for peace is to improvise peacebuilding without extensive preparation or predefined arrangements, but to develop new ideas and ways of doing things spontaneously with the energy coming from the creative interaction of the participants. A #PeaceJam may be loosely based on an agreed action or things suggested by one participant, or may be wholly improvisational.

A #PeaceJam session can range from very loose gatherings of amateurs to actions where the #PeaceJam host acts as a “conductor” bringing different performers, activists and others together. The point is to focus on all manner of peacebuilding, and expressing them, along with individual ideas, slogans and connections to others online using, and learning about social media. Let South Sudanese occupy the global social media landscape with peacebuilding, taking action against hate, conflict and incitement to violence.

“ Culture jamming is a tactic used to disrupt or subvert media culture and mainstream cultural institutions, using mass media to produce ironic or satirical commentary about itself, often subverting the original medium’s communication method. ”

A #PeaceJam can be as simple as a social gathering, and may be based upon existing types of gatherings, dances, theatre, songs or completely different forms of collaborative action.

### #Defyhatenow Social Media #Peacejam

Anyone can start a social media #peacejam by organising an event or simply by sharing your own peace messages online. Link your #peacejam to any kind of global peace event to reach a wider audience and have greater impact with your message. Examples: UN World Peace Day, 21st September; World Press Freedom Day, 3rd May; International Women’s Day, 8th March.

Use **#peacejam #Acts4Peace237** and **#defyhatenow** hashtags on your social media posts to help track the use of online channels for positive cultural change to gain a better understanding of the social media peace landscape.

Harness the power of social media to promote peace; online and offline with **#PEACEJAM**

Bring friends and communities in South Sudan and worldwide together to **#DEFYHATENOW #Peacejam** on Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Instagram, WhatsApp to be a social media Peace Ambassador.





## #DEFYHATENOW COMBATING HATE SPEECH THROUGH THE ARTS

#Peace4ALL music video

<https://youtu.be/DxZ-r2tM5-Y>



#defyhatenow #Peace4ALL Music Video, Rhino Camp Uganda 2017

The #PeaceVillage uses music to send positive and educational messages to people by discouraging hate speech online and offline. The music program was designed to break down the prejudices in South Sudanese communities and foster a culture of reconciliation. #Peace4ALL video recorded at Luruja, Terego (Rhino camp). The key singers are Sherry Zania (Aurora), Ronald Luate (RonnyRiddimz) and Adams Mandela (FreeBoy). Video shot by Benchmark films montage (P4A Camera shots by Yass Alman, directed and edited by AB soft.)

#ThinkB4UClick Video

[https://youtu.be/UMz6s\\_m0q\\_l](https://youtu.be/UMz6s_m0q_l)

**#ThinkB4UClick** (Think Before You Click) is an awareness campaign that aims at pointing out the dangers of misinformation, fake news and hate speech with a focus on South Sudan. The campaign aims to discuss with the public the consequences of hate speech and how it can be mitigated through individual actions that aim at creating safe spaces online and offline for citizens to interact with each other and discuss matters in a fruitful and informed manner. Artist : Free-Boy and Sherry Zania Lyrics : Free-Boy Adams Producer : Benchmark Films, Arua, Uganda

“Let’s talk” #defyhatenow podcast

<https://soundcloud.com/user-796361206>

Let’s Talk podcast on South Sudan features Achol Jok Mach in conversation with South Sudanese community leaders and citizens.

## DEFY! The Film



<https://youtu.be/vpvsIQTHBSI>

DEFY! tells the fictional story of senior politician Honourable David's new found passion for social media and the risks that come with using these platforms to spread propaganda and rumours.

Starring Silvano Yokwe, Doker Stephen, Winnie Joseph, Nicole Mariam  
Produced by SKP South Sudan, Bilpam Studios with r0g\_agency  
Director Egily Hakim Egily Written by Sam Lukudu



## ART FOR PEACE IN CAMEROON

### Felix Fokoua

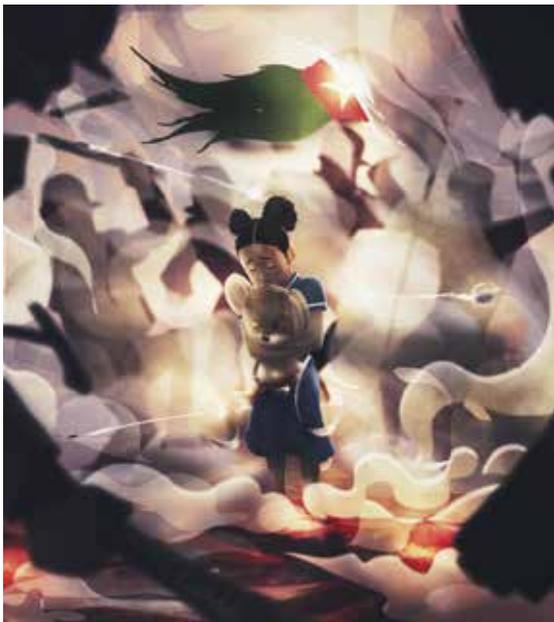
Felix Fokoua is a self-taught artist and graphic designer from Yaounde, Cameroon. He is a freelance illustrator, designer and was a concept artist with Kiro'o Games. Felix won best Young African designer 2017 at the African Design days in Morocco, MasterCard Foundation Young African Artists 2018 Award, and created Stickers 237 to ease communication on social media through Cameroonian language stickers. His illustrations feature in the #defyhatenow Field Guide Cameroon Edition 2020.

**SuperKmer** A Cameroonian superhero who stands against all the flaws, and wishes to help us grow towards peace and unity. [Top Image]

**Impact of War Conflict** impacts life and most of all our offspring. Let's think about what we wish to offer them as a legacy. [Middle Left Image]

**Stand Against War** Under the protection of the Unification symbol we pray for the souls who are gone from this conflict. And we stand still against those entities who strive to destroy Cameroon that ought to stay indivisible. [Middle Right Image]

**VivreEnsemble Gathering** around local foods we live together as one. [Bottom Image]



Meet Felix: <https://afropunk.com/2017/06/meet-self-taught-cameroonian-visual-artist-felix-fokoua/>

### Shadow Performance by Girls4Art

<https://youtu.be/XdfUbMdJPeM>

### The Spoken Word Event with Mac Alunge

World Philosophy Day 2019, Buea Cameroon

Shadow Performance by Girls4Art at The Spoken Word Event with Mac Alunge Edition II (2019) The Spoken Word Event with Mac Alunge is a quarterly National and Bilingual Platform for the expression of Spoken Word Art and other forms of CreativeStage Performance Arts. It is organised by Cameroonian Spoken Word Artist Mac Alunge; and this November, it was graced by the incredible Girls4Art crew from Sysy House of Fame.

Sysy House of Fame is an association contributing to Sustainable Development by engaging communities through Arts and Culture Education and the Media. We are redefining the role of entertainment by shifting from the paradigm of Entertainment to Entertainment for Development.

We are also involved in promoting Intercultural Dialogue and Exchanges while connecting stories through our online media platform [www.wikonnnectstories.com](http://www.wikonnnectstories.com). SHF started in 2016 with the primary purpose of promoting talents and contributing to Sustainable Development through arts, culture and the media. After working in the field for 2 years, we identified the challenges faced by arts in Cameroon. Prominent amongst many is the fact that we have tens of thousands of artists in Cameroon, less than a quarter of them are able to earn a livelihood from it. We decided to contribute by creating sustainable platforms where artists can thrive while contributing to Sustainable Development.

Working on a paradigm shift, from the mentality of entertainment which is limiting to the creative industry. We are adding Value to arts by training artists, creating and finding opportunities for them, developing their skills and providing life skills training as well.

#WorldPhilosophyDay2019 #TheSpokenWordEventWithMacAlunge2019 #SWE2019  
#TheSpokenWordEvent #MacAlunge2019 #UNBuea #SiliconMountainBuea #UNESCOBuea <https://www.sysyhouseoffame.org/> <https://strawacademy.org/> <https://www.macalunge.com/>



## FROM HATE SPEECH TO PEACEBUILDING

### Prinz Johnson from Cameroon

Interview by Salamatou Blanche

I am Ebigwe Johnson Agbenjang from the South West region of Cameroon, Mamfe Manyi Division. Located now in Bonaberi in Douala Littoral region, because of the crisis. As the Director General of JE production, a Cameroonian movie actor, gospel standup comedian and member of the Human Rights Defence Club, I exercise leadership skills as a peacebuilder, thereby contributing to sustaining peace and development anywhere I find myself.

### When does your action for peace begin?

It is clear that when I was younger, I knew nothing about peace, nor hate speech. Back in my secondary school days, I led my peers, whether in social life or running campaign activities for politicians in my community up to the level of high school. Until the crisis began in 2016, when I and some of my peers were convinced to circulate, and share information on activities of secessionists and we were given a lot of promises and even financial assistance to inspire other youths to join the struggle. We were actively involved in sharing SMSs to all contacts we received from hierarchy, as airtime credits were made available daily and contributions towards our financial upkeep and transportation during any youth gathering.

### Why did you choose peace? What are your good points in terms of awareness?

Choosing peace as my core agenda is because I am a movie actor and a gospel comedian. Influencing society through my arts instead of using movies to incite hate, I can use this movie acting to influence positive change in the society.

### How have you overcome obstacles? (cultural, languages, etc.)

From November 2018 until now, I have faced many challenges in the field, especially meeting those who know your past and you are now coming to tell them something contrary. Finance is another challenge as you carry out campaigns with little or no financial support. Schools and other institutions went out for campaigns always believe we are filled with money to carry out the activity and they always ask for their share starting with the gateman. Some will refuse you access and stop you entering the gate until you pay a certain sum as 'registration' before you carry out the activity. Especially when no document from the government is backing you up.

Language has been another serious problem to communicate the message. Hate to Cameroonians who do not understand English, because I am an English speaking Cameroonian with average skills in French, some will not even give me the opportunity to express myself. The first way to handle this was by engaging a youth who is bilingual to assist during campaigns. I am now taking private classes to improve my level of speaking the French language.

2020 is an election year that promises to be important in the fight you lead for peace. Have you planned actions to anticipate or mitigate hate speech?

Concerning the 2020 elections in my country, I am mobilising influential youths who are going to join me sensitise others about hate speech, and should not give that opportunity for any politicians to manipulate us. Many youths promote hate speech because they are ignorant about its negative effects on society.

### What is your message for peace?

The message for my fellow Cameroonians especially the youths:

“  
Peace is the only way out.  
”



## CASE STUDY: AMPLIFIER 'WE THE PEOPLE'

<https://amplifier.org/>

Amplifier is a design lab that builds art to amplify the voices of grassroots movements. Working with a community of social change partners, to build symbols, language, and distribution strategies that can change the national narrative. Drawing from a deep portfolio of artists to commission new art, we then take the work and distribute it in unparalleled numbers through creative space hacks, reaching new audiences and driving real change.

We the People is a nonpartisan campaign dedicated to igniting a national dialogue about American identity and values through public art and story sharing. On Inauguration Day, and since, these images have flooded America and the globe with new symbols of hope to combat the rising power of nationalism, bigotry, and intolerance.

The We the People campaign aims to restore hope, imagination, curiosity, and creativity into our country's

dialogue. At a time of so much discrimination and injustice, this photograph taken by French and Senegalese artist Delphine Diallo and converted into an illustration by Shepard Fairey reminds us of the power of youth and the world we're building around them.

"We finally understand the necessity to diffuse more art to the public not only for the elite. This art is meant to spark a conversation. What does WE THE PEOPLE—these three famous words in the preamble to the Constitution—mean in the 21st century?" Delphine Diallo

This image of 12-year-old Menelik, calling us to #ProtectEachOther, has been downloaded on Amplifier's website and shared thousands of times.

<https://www.instagram.com/delphinediallo/>



Credit: Delphine Diallo and Shepard Fairey, 'We The People Protect Each Other' for Amplifier.org

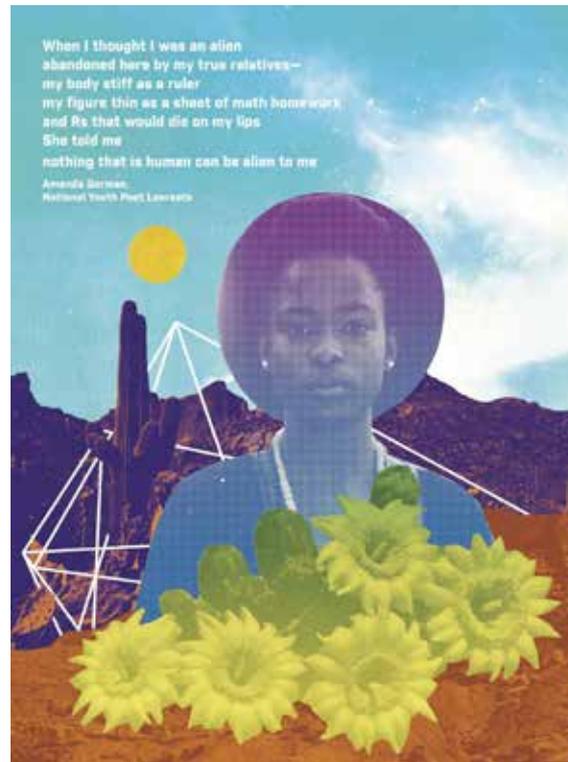
### **Amplifier: We The Future**

<https://amplifier.org/campaigns/we-the-future/>

The We the Future campaign showcases ten young leaders representing ten diverse movements, each already building us a better world. They are drafting and passing legislation. They are working on climate justice, criminal justice reform, voting rights, immigration rights, disability justice, gun reform, queer rights, and literacy. Their work is nonpartisan, and it carries the energy of countless communities from every background. In a time of uncertainty, these icons show us a path forward, and they show us that the Future is already here. Join us in our campaign to support them.

The National Youth Poet Laureate champions the voices of creative, socially-conscious, motivated young storytellers. In 2017, the Laureate partnered with Amplifier to create artwork celebrating its inaugural appointee, Amanda Gorman. The Harvard student is a published poet, U.N. Youth Delegate, community activist, and more. "My poetry isn't always rooted in current events, but it's always rooted in world or domestic events which speak to social justice and equality. I can write poetry about anything under the sun, but what calls me again and again is to use my pen lyrically in a way in which I can have a dialogue about race, about gender, about class in a way that I couldn't necessarily do with prose."

## We Who Belong



Credit: Lexx Valdez, 'We Who Belong, National Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman' for Amplifier.org



## ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE

### #BeTheChange

Any form of creative self-expression is one way to empower ordinary citizens to mobilise action. The use of technology and digital media has allowed art movements to grow with unprecedented speed and access. Social media can be used to change deeply rooted stereotypes and prejudices by giving a platform for those who were often silenced or had no vehicle for their message. This leads to the birth of new creative online art movements where people break down long-established barriers. Many art movements are working to facilitate new perspectives, cultivate dialogue and build a culture of empathy through creative connections and expression.

### Arterial Network - Art for Social Change

<http://www.arterialnetwork.org>

Africa-wide arts platform that works against poverty and for human rights on the continent. Arterial Network is a dynamic Pan-African, civil-society network of artists, cultural activists, entrepreneurs, enterprises, NGOs, institutions, and donors active in Africa's creative and cultural sectors.

### #BlackLivesMatter

<http://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>

The Black Lives Matter Global Network is a chapter-based, member-led organization whose mission is to build local power and to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. We affirm the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, undocumented folks, folks with records, women, and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. Our network centers those who have been

marginalized within Black liberation movements.

We are working for a world where Black lives are no longer systematically targeted for demise. We affirm our humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression. The call for Black lives to matter is a rallying cry for ALL Black lives striving for liberation.



## CASE STUDY: BEAUTIFUL RISING

<https://beautifulrising.org/about>

Beautiful Rising harnesses the insights of change-makers worldwide to help make our movements more strategic, creative and effective. Inspired by the concept of a “pattern language,” Beautiful Rising teases out the key elements of creative activism.

### Waging NonViolence

People powered news and analysis

By Phil Wilmot

<http://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/new-activist-toolkit-arrives-beautiful-fashion/>

Beautiful Rising merges the analytical framework of creative nonviolence to the lived realities of activists in the global south. Beautiful Rising’s reach extends far beyond Uganda. Community organizers, trainers, tech gurus and writers across six continents, the Beautiful Rising team is working to broaden the relatively thin library of resources on creative nonviolence and social change strategy. What’s more, they’ve done it in a way that takes into consideration the concerns of activists in the global south: security, accessibility and usability.

While working with ActionAid International – a global civil society federation devoted to issues of corruption, poverty and human rights – Danish activist Søren Warburg noticed a very significant shortcoming within the global community of nonviolent activists: a lack of idea and resource sharing.

“There has been very little cross-movement learning from successes and failures,” said Warburg, who then got the idea to spearhead Beautiful Rising. “A lot of resources in the nonviolent direct action catalogue come from the global north, yet courageous activists in the global south are living a whole other political life.”

Warburg realized that – beyond using his professional position to network across more than 40 countries – he would need to take an external look to social and political movements on the ground. This led to a deepening of his past connection with Beautiful Trouble, a group aimed at codifying the innovations of activists in various forms, including a book that offered a starting point for the toolkit.

“The idea was to merge the Beautiful Trouble analytical framework of creative activism to the lived realities of activists in the global south,” Warburg noted.

### Beautiful Trouble - Tactics

<http://beautifultrouble.org/tactic/>

### Conflict is #Solvable

<https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/solvable/solvable-podcast-series/conflict-is-solvable/>

Victor Ochen is, the Founder and Executive Director for the African Youth Initiative Network (AYINET) which has provided reconstructive medical repair to over 21,000 war victims of rape, mutilation, and gunshots. He also serves as the UN Goodwill Ambassador for Peace and Justice and is the first Ugandan and youngest ever African nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2015. Interview by Jacob Weisberg. Produced & published by The Rockefeller Foundation #Solvable podcast series.

**Rogue Citizen - The People's Creative Toolkit**<http://www.roguecitizen.com/peoples-toolkit.html>

Video Tutorials on making signs & banners. "Our story has to be told, and a lot of people have to listen. Every important story, labor campaign and grassroots effort to change the way we work and live for the better asks these questions. The solutions are different every time. The creative and strategic tools offered here can help take those solutions from conversation to reality."

**speak2tweet**[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speak\\_To\\_Tweet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speak_To_Tweet)

Speak To Tweet or speak2tweet is a communications service which allows users to leave a "tweet" on Twitter by calling a designated international telephone number and leaving a voice message. The service was developed to help people stay connected when an Internet connection is unavailable, specifically in response to the Internet shutdown during the 2011 Egyptian revolution. Speak2tweet service was launched for Syria on 30 November 2012.

**#ThisFlag campaign**

Zimbabwe @PastorEvanLive

<https://twitter.com/PastorEvanLive?s=20>

Citizen | Author | speaker | Social Justice advocate | Humor | Creative



## ONDOA L'AFRIKAIN PRESENTS: THE PROMISE OF THE WIND

**By Carole Leuwe**<http://visionartistik.com/2019/12/29/conte-performatif-ondoa-lafrikain-presente-la-promise-du-vent/>

Evundü (the wind) had worked tirelessly for three days and three nights to build the landmarks of humanity, inside which he placed Sîî (the earth) and all its inhabitants.

On the fourth day, tired but proud of his work, he sat in his armchair next to his mysterious confidant Biem-bia-bum.

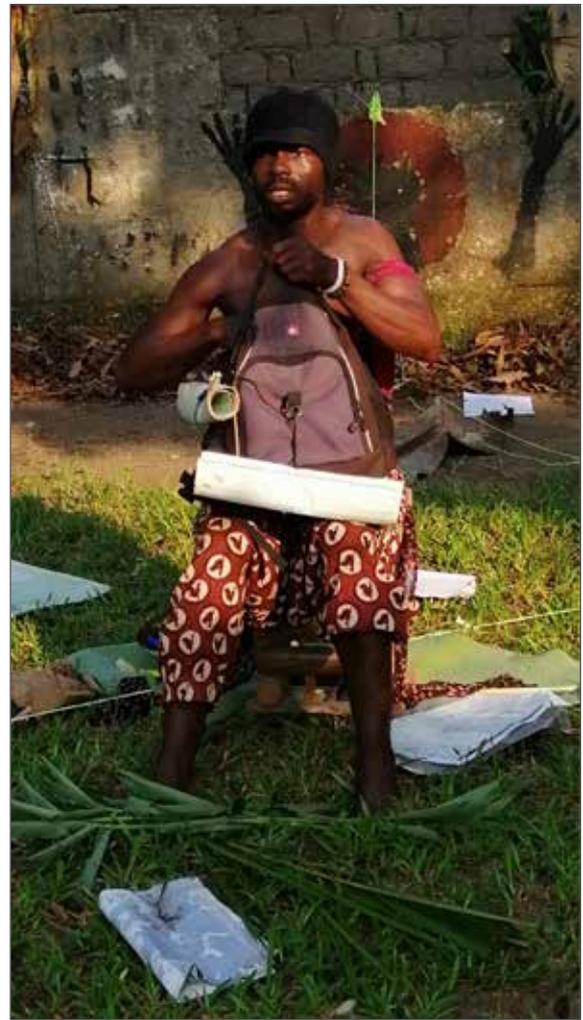
Some time later, a rebellion broke out, led by a tiny fraction of the inhabitants who did not appreciate the spirit of equality that existed between all the inhabitants. This is how they succeeded in destroying and breaking out of the bounds of humanity...

This act saddened Evundü who got so furious, he could not contain himself and dissipated around the world in search of repentance from the insurgents.

Any positive act is capable of bringing human beings back to the landmarks of humanity. Before exploding with anger, however, he made a promise; part of which, he entrusted to his confidant Biem-bia-bum, the other part, was never parted from him!

What was this promise all about? Who was it all about?

Maybe it was about you, maybe someone else ...



Credit: Carole Leuwe, visionArtistik.com

This art performance took place on December 14, 2019 in Bonendale with the participation of the Art 123 studio of Justine Gaga, a Cameroonian renowned visual art artist.

Ondoua is a storyteller performer who grew up in the village moulded by his father who was one of the leading artists who introduced the #Bol rhythm to modernity.

He started as a rapper, before he met Emmanuel Dou, a Cameroonian bass player with whom he sparked a new cultural impetus. Together, they set up the group N'DABORO. In 2015, they recorded a 13-track Audio Word Music album with the band. His artistic career led him to work with artists such as: ALDO NDICKA (music) BODULE MUKILO (theatre), Gabriella BADJECK (performance) TALLY MBOCK (Visual arts and performance), MARSU ESSOMBA (Slam Rap).

Since January 2018, ONDOA l'Afrikain has embarked on a solo career in the art of storytelling and performance and travels nation-wide to showcase his talents in festivals and trains children with disabilities on the art of performance.

In his quest to understand the intricacies of slavery, its origin and the actors who fought for its eradication, Ondoa helped us to question our humanity. Questioning our intelligence. Questioning our mentality. Of our ability to overcome without forgetting, but also to celebrate these little-known heroes who have marked history. Our history.

Have you ever heard of Victor Schoelcher? Before Ondoua presented his work to us, I did not know of him. What a shame. And yet, and yet!

Victor Schoelcher, (born July 22, 1804, Paris, France—died Dec. 26, 1893, Houilles), was a French journalist and politician who was France's greatest advocate of ending slavery in the empire.

Although born into a wealthy porcelain-manufacturing family, Schoelcher showed little inclination for a business career. After a trip to the United States in 1829, he was horrified by the abuses of slavery and Schoelcher became a dedicated abolitionist.

He worked as a journalist from 1829 to 1848, writing ceaselessly on the barbarism of slavery. As undersecretary for the navy in 1848, Schoelcher prepared the famous decree that abolished slavery in the colonies. He was elected deputy to the French national legislature from Martinique (1848) and from Guadeloupe (1849), where he worked passionately to eliminate the abuses of colonialism and plead the cause of blacks in the Assembly.

Source: Britannica.com/Biography/Victor-Schoelcher



Credit: Carole Leuwe, visionArtistik.com

Bonendale, this beautiful village in Bonaberi, Douala welcomed us with its usual warmth. The population came out to witness “the Promise of the wind”. Even though we could not erect our plate with his name as planned in honour of this brave and courageous man. We were told that the traditional authorities were not aware of this and so we had to meet them before we could proceed. Another frustration for sure. 123 Art studio, the technical partner of the performance, promised to follow up.

We are so proud of Victor's fight against racism and slavery, we are sure of one thing, the fight for freedom shall never be given to us! We will have to fight for it.... today more than ever!

Yes the Promise lives on... its fulfilment could be anytime! Hopefully.

Thanks to the artist!



# 8

# Trauma Healing



# 08 TRAUMA HEALING CONTENTS

WHAT IS TRAUMA?

CAUSES OF TRAUMA

MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS

TRIGGERS

MENTAL HEALTH & SOCIAL MEDIA

VICARIOUS TRAUMA

FIRST DRAFT NEWS: VICARIOUS TRAUMA GUIDE: PEACE FORMULA

MENTAL HEALTH SELF CARE KIT

CASE STUDY: LAUGHTER FOR TRAUMA HEALING IN CAMEROON

JAL TEKÄDÄ, THE JOURNEY OF MY LIFE

## #DEFYHATENOW | CHAPTER 8

# TRAUMA HEALING

## A community based understanding on Trauma and the healing process

Written and Compiled by: **Sharlotte Ainebyoona Kigezo**

### Communities in Concentration:

South Sudanese Refugees (Rhino Camp, Arua)  
Cameroon IDPs

January 2020

The Trauma Healing Guide was created in response to the experiences of South Sudanese refugee communities living in Rhino Camp, Uganda by psychologist Sharlotte Ainebyoona Kigezo, working with Platform Africa community based organisation for social change and citizen empowerment.

A trauma related questionnaire was created to gain understanding of trauma from the perspective of the communities in focus, South Sudanese refugees in Rhino Camp and IDPs in Cameroon. The causes of Trauma included in this guide are from conversations with the communities in focus.

The questions of how to recognise symptoms and develop health coping mechanisms are addressed from a professional understanding of trauma and it's long term effects, along with myths and misconceptions explore what may or may not be true about trauma. Triggers are external, internal, interpersonal and intrapersonal reminders of the event, and can also become contributors to the healing process of trauma.

Trauma and the correlations to social media as a trigger in the healing processes is discussed in relation to mental health and social media. Protective factors using social media to create mental health awareness and build healing patterns are proposed.

Vicarious trauma acquired from ongoing contact with traumatic content is addressed. A Mental Health self-care kit for protecting the brain is proposed to help build healthier coping mechanisms and support networks for resilient communities & individuals.

“

It is common for people to have experienced stressful and upsetting events. Even if those events happened to you a long time ago; those events can still affect how a person thinks and feels today. Things that happen to us can affect how we react to other people and situations many years later. Trauma is the person's experience of a situation – how they think and feel about it afterwards, it's the situation itself. No two people will have the exact same reaction to a given situation and no reaction is wrong or shameful.

”



## WHAT IS TRAUMA?

**The most basic definition of trauma is:**

**“A person’s stressful experience of a situation.”**

Trauma will always be individual, that is why the most basic information on trauma is mostly drawn from personal experiences or research that involves individuals who have experienced situations that have made them feel mental pressure (trauma). Never is one person’s experience, the same as the others; even when the situation was/is the same.

**Other definitions see trauma as:**

**“Events of high emotional intensity, particularly if they are experienced in a vulnerable moment of life.”**

**“An event that severely threatens our physical survival or safety or our emotional and psychological integrity and safety.”**

This is the case of insults, mocking a child, a scare in the darkness, chasing someone with snakes and spiders, slander, losing a parent at an early age, coercion for sexual advantage. Some of these examples sometimes come out as triggers especially when someone has experienced a mentally stressful event of the same kind before. The same way physical accidents leave permanent scars, trauma may also leave marks for many years.

**Anything long term comes with effects and some of the effects of long-term untreated trauma are:**

- Alter people’s habits and outlook on life
- Take its toll on family and interpersonal relationships
- Trigger physical symptoms and diseases
- Cause problems with decision making which head to additions
- Cause dissociation
- Precipitate self-destructive behavior

*It is important to note that not all the symptoms mentioned above are in relation to trauma, seeing a professional so the diagnosis is clear is important but if one has experienced a traumatic event before it is mandatory to pay attention to these effects and get considerate help.*



## CAUSES OF TRAUMA

**Some causes of trauma are:**

- Physical abuse e.g. domestic abuse (GBV)
- Sexual abuse e.g. rape, incest, molestation
- Emotional abuse
- Severe childhood neglect e.g. forced separation very early in life from primary caregiver, chronic misattunement of caregiver to child’s attachment signals (“mal-attachment”)

- War/combat experiences
- Witnessing others being harmed or victimized e.g. someone being brutally beaten or tortured
- Serious bodily harm or any significant injury
- Life-threatening disease e.g. cancer, kidney failure, HIV/AIDS
- Significant psycho/social loss, e.g., bankruptcy, traumatic family loss, or loss of precious property
- Sudden death of a loved one
- Natural disasters (earthquakes, fires, floods, hurricanes, etc)
- Serious accidents such as automobile, plane or other high-impact scenarios
- Experiences of IDPs in Cameroon

*On Sunday 5th of January 2020 a team from #DefyHateNow visited some Internally displaced persons on Buea in the southwest Region of Cameroon.*

*The meeting lasted about 1hour at Jongo Hub, a #Tech4Peace Lab with locations in Buea and Douala. Engaging these Internally Displaced Persons IDPs in a chat session, Pedmia Shatu Tita a Journalist from Bamenda one of the zones by the ongoing crisis made the IDPs feel comfortable to share their stories by sharing her own story of rape. She also talked about her visit to the bushes to visit their peers and invited them for a talk at one of her fireside chats, where she holds heart to heart talks with women.*

*This created a conducive atmosphere as the IDPS took turns to share their stories. There were 11 stories expressed, and what was common in their different narratives was the fact that they dropped out of school and they expressed their thirst for education. Those that manage to go cannot achieve full time education because they go under very stressful conditions: for instance a lack of textbooks, no registration fee for those in examination classes, lack of school fees, poor diets, to name but a few.*

*They shared their experiences while in the bushes during the military invasion. Some were raped while in the bushes, since they ran into the bush with just the clothes on their bodies, they were forced to wash the dresses and wear them over and over, during menstruation they had no option, they had no sanitary towels napkins, nothing to use therefore they would get stained and have to wash the same dresses and put it back on.*

*Their diet was not the best as they could barely get something to eat. They noted that some people with whom they lived in the bushes died during that time, and this still remains fresh in their minds.*

*Another was a case of rape by an unknown guy in a gang. She found it difficult to talk but finally she spoke amidst tears on how she got raped as they were living in the bush.*

*All of them ran from villages in the south west Region to the chief town Buea where some live in an orphanage, with relatives and others with good samaritans as host communities. Their hosts say despite the pressure from their own families they cannot ignore the plight of the IDPs so they help them.*

*The IDPs were brought together by the organisation "Social Change and Establishment Center for Youths and Disabled Persons SECEYDPS" headed by Fembe Hilda.*

The stories highlighted above are to show some of the causes of trauma through the eyes of IDPs in Cameroon. Their stories are different and their reactions differ too, but one can tell from the narration that these are events with the capacity to put extreme pressure on the brain, thus influencing emotional and physical reactions later in life.



## MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS

The importance of highlighting myths/misconceptions is to understand the dynamics of trauma and how to handle the process of trauma healing. Myths/misconceptions come with a view or opinion that is incorrect because it is based on faulty thinking or understanding.

Some of these myths/misconceptions are: (Adopted from Psychology notes: PTSD, Unit PSY 418 by Dr. Stephen Ndegwa - Daystar University)

### **Everyone experiences PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)**

PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is caused by specific traumatic event not typically experienced by the average person thus causing much more pressure on the brain, but this does not mean that the reaction is similar to everyone. Many factors need to be considered before one is diagnosed with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

### **PTSD symptoms manifest immediately after a traumatic event**

In many cases, it takes a month or two before symptoms are noticeable, and they can be brought forth by stress and old memories.

### **Anyone suffering from trauma is unstable and violent**

Symptoms of trauma vary depending on the person with the disorder. Angry outbursts and violence don't always occur, even if the illness was brought forth by events involving violent crime and torture, how a person reacts to a traumatic event is dependent on their individual attributes and sensibilities.

### **Trauma is limited to a specific age group**

Children are vulnerable to trauma too despite their apparent resilience to mental stress. A study by Dr. Annette La Greca showed that children exhibit signs of PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (developed from trauma) two years after a natural disaster. For example, during a family's recovery from a catastrophic hurricane, a child may struggle with adjusting to a new environment, where they may be without their friends and some of their family, making the recovery even more difficult.

### **Recovery is impossible**

With the right systems in place; strong social support system, stable coping mechanisms, positive defense mechanisms. Then the recovery process for a traumatic event victim becomes easy with close attention of course.



## TRIGGERS

### **PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**

Triggers are psychological stimulus that prompts recall of a previous traumatic experience. Someone who has experienced trauma may feel fine till they hear a car backfire loudly, suddenly one is very afraid, and with that stimulus bring back images of a time of a war or an accident one witnessed or experienced.

**PEOPLE**

- A rape perpetrator or a person in combat uniform

**THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS**

- Thoughts and feelings of threat or attack
- Thoughts and feelings of vulnerability or rejection

**THINGS**

- Buildings or places e.g. a dark hallway

**SCENTS**

- Fuel (Petrol or Kerosene “paraffin”)

**SHOWS, NEWS, MOVIES**

- Watching a combat movie, a relative documentary

**SITUATIONS**

- Loneliness, separation or loss, conflicts in relationships, lack of power and control



## MENTAL HEALTH & SOCIAL MEDIA

### Trauma + Hate Speech

“

Social Media enables identity expression, exploration and experimentation: something natural for the human experience.

”

The Effect of Social Media on Identity Construction: Ugur Gunduz

Social media allows for identity freedom, thus giving us human beings a chance to express ourselves clearly, but in hiding. This can be seen as a route to healing the things that hurt, but most times pain is directed to negativity because, seeing another suffer feeds a crucial part of trauma healing; The Ego.

With the influence of social media and the provision for identity development as per learning what one likes or dislikes, room for extreme trauma trigger control is left to caution. This is because the internet harbors anyone and anything not aware enough of the impact of pictures and words.

It is important for trauma survivors to build identity, it is from identity that one gets to understand how to use the internet for healing whether as a sender of a message or the receiver of the message. One of the ways of growing identity that is safe from internet negativity and cyber bullying is from forming strong social support systems.

### Importance of social support

Studies show that when people go through traumatic experiences and share their experiences with others, their health improves. Although talking about a stressful event can temporarily arouse people, it calms them in the long run.

Social support systems are social network’s provision of psychological and material resources intended to benefit an individual’s capacity to cope with stress.

Social support comes in form of family, friends, colleagues, group therapy sessions, trauma healing initiatives and can take any forms including: structural support (the size and extent of the individual's social network, frequency of social interactions), functional support (behavior that foster feelings of comfort leading the person to believe that s/he is loved, respected, and/or cared for by others), instrumental/material support (good and services that help solve practical problems) and informational/cognitive support (provision of relevant information intended to help individuals cope with current difficulties, understand the crisis and adjust to the changes that have occurred).

### **Protective Factors**

Protecting identity from the damages of the internet

#### **SUPPORT**

- Building solid social support systems and having strong interpersonal relationships

#### **SPIRITUALITY**

- A major protective factor to any psychological issue for the strength of faith and hope

#### **IDENTITY**

- Learning what or who you identify with.
- This builds on ego and with time helps one build on confidence.

#### **PHYSICAL HEALTH**

- This not only keeps the mind active and fresh, but the body healthy too.

#### **RECREATION/SELF-CARE**

- Discovering passions and talents acts as a channel for positive coping mechanism which are used to build identity and thus become a strong foundation for confidence and self-awareness



## **VICARIOUS TRAUMA**

It is important that caregivers and other humanitarian workers take good care of themselves as they are prone to being secondary victims.

Vicarious trauma, also known as compassion fatigue or contact victimization is a stress reaction that may be experienced by the helper working with survivors of traumatic life events exposed to them through disclosure of traumatic image and events. Any trauma counselors and trauma care givers need to always receive professional care and support.

This should be offered by well-trained professionals in order to offer continued learning, support and referral.

**As a caregiver, you are encouraged to pay attention to your:**

#### **PHYSICAL WELL BEING**

- Sleep well
- Eat healthy (adequate nutrition)
- Rest
- Exercise regularly
- Breath
- Mental well being

#### **POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND REFRAMING CONTEXT**

- View obstacles as opportunities to learn and grow
- Become more solution oriented towards challenges

## RELAXATION/MEDITATION

## EMOTIONAL WELL BEING

### HAVE STABLE SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- Supportive relationships with family, friends and colleagues
- Deal with emotions appropriately: in case of anger outburst, build on positive outlets and coping mechanisms

### RELATIONSHIPS

- Cultivate solid relationships and spend time with people you trust, who accept and care for you.
- An effective caregiver needs to be aware of their needs and seeks help.
- Access to referral agencies for the clients/trauma survivors (legal, medical, food).
- This information should be readily available to decrease the chances of developing burn out due to many roles being played at once.
- Taking care of yourself as a caregiver is the only way to avoid burnout or even vicarious trauma.

### A care giver's role in crisis recovery

#### MAKE CONTACT

- Establish contact with a trauma survivor by introduction and offering assistance

#### REDUCE ANXIETY

- Reflect calmness and attention, make the survivor feel heard and understood

#### FOCUS ON THE ISSUES

- Ask follow up questions of presented issues, listen actively

#### EVALUATE RESOURCES

##### PERSONAL RESOURCES

- Inquire on intellectual abilities, skills from past experiences, helpful attitudes or motives that can them grow

##### INTERPERSONAL RESOURCES

- Help the survivor develop networks within friends, family members, church members, business associates and community members

##### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Mobilize other resources; medical, financial, educational and anything that is available in the time of crisis and after crisis

##### PLAN INTERVENTION

- Together with victim, list alternative course of action: allow for the victim to take full control, gives room for confidence.

“ We must do for others what they cannot do for themselves, but we must not do for them what they would not do to themselves. The problem is finding the wisdom to know the difference. ”

**ENCOURAGE ACTION**

- Encourage crisis victims that action involves risk, therefore listen and learn about the problem, decide on course of action

*Remember: Not all crises have solutions, and permanent change requires one to face reality, readjust, and plan and keep hope.*

**INSTILL HOPE**

- Many people become hopeless during or after a crisis and this may lead to depression or other negative thoughts, but hope helps people avoid despair and releases energy to meet the crisis situation.

**FOLLOW UP**

- Make contact on anniversaries, helps one feel taken care of and helps on knowing how one is coping.

**REFERRAL**

- With the right systems and structures in place, it is important to refer trauma survivors to further assistance when you feel the help one is offering might be stagnating. This way ongoing and more sustainable help is found.




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## **TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR SELF-MANAGEMENT**

**FIRST DRAFT NEWS: VICARIOUS TRAUMA GUIDE**

<https://firstdraftnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/vicarioustrauma.pdf?x80491>

**PEACE FORMULA**

The PEACE Formula for resilience is an easy-to-remember model you can use to check in with yourself on a regular basis about how you are approaching things and your attitude towards yourself. It's about directly ensuring you're making wise choices about how you use your time and energy. When working with challenging material, step back to ask yourself these questions:

**PACE**

- How fast am I going?
- Can I keep up this level of intensity?
- Where are the spaces for reflection and recharging?

**ENERGY**

- What are my energy patterns?
- Am I able to organise things so I'm tackling the most challenging material when my energy and resources are higher?
- Am I listening to my body when my energy is lower?

**ACCEPTING...AND...ADAPTING**

- If I'm having a difficult experience or am vaguely aware of problem signs, what might I need to accept that I may have been refusing to acknowledge?
- How could I adapt to take account of my needs so I can be more resilient in the long run?

**CHOICE**

- Where can I choose to focus my attention?
- What can I choose to let go of (perhaps just for now)?
- What do I want to ask for in terms of support?

## ESTEEM

- What kind of messages am I giving myself?
- For example, am I giving myself a hard time for struggling with distress?
- Can I remind myself that I'm good at what I do and am not failing but am taking care of my overall resilience?

## BREATHING AND OTHER MINDFULNESS-BASED TOOLS

Focusing on your breathing can help to calm and regulate your bodily reactions and give you a sense of being anchored. Ways to do this include:

### 7-11 BREATHING

Breathe in to the count of seven and out to the count of eleven and repeat until you begin to feel more in control. Thereafter continue to simply follow the normal rhythm of your breath.

The three-step breathing space can be used before, during or after a difficult task or period of challenging work:

Prepare yourself by closing or lowering your eyes and noticing the contact your body makes with the floor and the chair. Notice your feet and your back and shift into a position that feels alert and dignified.

#### Step 1

Notice and name the mood you are in. Notice and name any feelings that are present. Notice and acknowledge any sensations in your body.

#### Step 2

Focus all of your attention onto your breathing. Track each breath as it enters the body, moves down into the belly and up and out of the body. Continue for a minute or so just tracking your breath.

#### Step 3

Expand your awareness to your whole body, as if you're breathing out through the pores of your skin.

To come out of the breathing space, notice once more the contact your body makes with the chair and your feet on the floor. Allow the light to begin to filter through your eyelids and gradually lift your eyelids to allow the outside world back in.

## GROUNDING

This a technique that helps to get your mind and body working together in the here and now, and is useful when you're feeling overwhelmed. Try any combination of the following: focus for five seconds on five objects you can see around you; focus on the contact your body makes with your chair and/or the floor; hold a hot or cold drink in both hands and fully feel the hot or cold temperature; smell a food or flower or other item; splash water on your face; say your name, age, where you are now and where you will be later in the day out loud; get up and walk, noticing each step; focus your attention on sounds, first those near you, then those further away and outside the room.

## ATTENTION SWITCHING

Bring to mind an image that makes you feel safe, connected or protected.

Make it a conscious process as you switch between the image and the one you are struggling with. Talk to yourself as you switch! Remember this is not an exercise to block out your experience, rather to exert control over it.

Create rituals that help you consciously begin and stop work.



## MENTAL HEALTH SELF CARE KIT

Keeping the peace around you

### IDENTIFY UNHEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS

- Social withdrawal
- Over sleeping
- Over eating sweets or fatty foods
- Over using medication
- Over using drugs (alcohol, cigarettes, opioids)
- Taking out stress on others verbally or physically

### ADOPT HEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS

- Physical exercise
- Joining a sports team in school or the community
- Going for walks
- Engaging in chores

### BUILDING AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS

- Joining church service teams (choir, church cleaning team, usher)
- Arranging meetups with friends and community members
- Signing up for school clubs
- Consider volunteer work but also allow to join giving back to the world activities, in a way that's profoundly satisfying

### DEVELOP A "STRESS RELIEF" KIT

- Take walks in nature
- Meditate
- Put your thoughts into words or paintings (poetry, music, stories, art, drawings)
- Keep a journal or diary
- Learn a habit of reading
- Make a cup of tea or coffee when it gets a bit too overwhelming
- Talk with a friend or professional counsellor if you are struggling to cope



## CASE STUDY: LAUGHTER FOR TRAUMA HEALING IN CAMEROON

**Amindeh Blaise Atabong, 2019**

YAOUNDE, CAMEROON – For Canisia, a woman traumatized by the conflict in the English-speaking part of Cameroon, May 26 was a day of laughter, the first in 18 months.

"This event has wiped out my sorrow and given me the impetus to move on. But I still feel for the thousands of other Anglophone refugees and internally displaced persons who have not had this experience," Canisia added, bursting into laughter as she watched another comedian perform on stage.

Canisia is one of thousands English-speaking Cameroonians displaced by a drawn-out conflict in the North West and South West regions. She, like a hundred others, has benefited from a local initiative that offered them psychological healing from the trauma of the bloody conflict.

Like many displaced survivors of the conflict, Canisia has been traumatized by her experiences. But getting

psycho-social care is a difficult thing when the priority is often food and shelter. Comedians like Senior Pastor are stepping in with a local initiative to fill the gap.

## Laughter Therapy

The 'Laughter Heals' comedy performance is a flagship show to build cohesion and provide an avenue for the psychological healing of broken hearts in Cameroon's fractured community. Host of the show, Senior Pastor, an award-winning Cameroonian comedian, said it was his own small contribution to countering hate speech and bringing relief to victims.

"We gave them hope, laughter, and depression left. In fact, we gave them our best," Senior Pastor said. He notes that the show, more than six hours long when staged in Yaounde, will be performed in other towns as the means provide.

Ntui Olga, an internally displaced person from Kumba who attended the show, said it was awesome: "In a very long time, I could feel like we are in peace time."

Senior Pastor was joined by renowned Cameroonian comedians, both Anglophones and Francophones, among them Moustique le Karismatik, O'Boy Da Comic, Sparko, Marcus, Aunty Bara, Ulrich Takam, Badly Brought Up and Oracle. Gospel artists such as Prosper Menko also gave soul-searching performances.

The comedians joked and touched a bit on the conflict in order to make survivors laugh about it. But they did so without any form of prejudice.

The 'Laughter Heals' comedy show was inspired by a project carried out last year by a local organization – Local Youth Corner Cameroon (LOYOC) – which targeted influencers. The project's principal objective was to get youths to say 'No' to hate speech, a factor fueling the conflict.

Chufi Henrietta Ngong épe Mega, a senior youth and action counsellor in Cameroon's ministry of youth affairs and civic education, said in an interview that the 'Laughter Heals' concept is "a huge success as most comedians thrilled the audience and almost everyone departed from the hall with a broad smile on their faces." Chufi wants such platforms to be promoted because they offer the audience, mostly conflict-affected persons, entertainment, as well as relief from stress and help to heal their souls.

<https://civicidea.com/2019/06/25/laughter-helps-heal-traumatized-survivors-of-camerouns-simmering-conflict/>



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## JAL TEKÄDÄ, THE JOURNEY OF MY LIFE

<https://youtu.be/Xpf1s664Pns>

Jal Tekädä, The Journey of My Life is a short film produced and performed by internally displaced persons (IDPs) at the UN protection of civilians (PoC) site in Bentiu, South Sudan, a town that witnessed some of the most brutal fighting of the conflict. The film tells the story of young IDPs' journey to seek forgiveness and healing from the vicious civil war that erupted in December 2013.

### Using Film To Heal The Wounds Of War In South Sudan

<https://weblog.iom.int/using-film-heal-wounds-war-south-sudan>

### Mental Health & Psychosocial Report: ReliefWeb PDF

[https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IOM\\_MHU\\_MHPSS.PDF](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IOM_MHU_MHPSS.PDF)



## SOURCES & RESOURCES

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<http://www.ctc@georgetown.edu>

**Dr. S. Ndegwa: Psychology Notes, Unit Psy 418 – PTSD (September: 2015)**  
**How does social support enhance resilience in the trauma - exposed individual (2015)**  
<http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol20/iss4/art10/>

**Ugur Gunduz: The Effect of Social Media on Identity Construction (September: 2017)**  
[www.mcser.org](http://www.mcser.org)

**Chapter 3: Understanding the Impact of Trauma**  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK207191/>

**Trauma symptoms, Causes and Effects**  
<https://www.psychguides.com/trauma/>

**Trauma Healing For Refugees**  
 Platform Africa: Training of Trainers [VIDEO]  
<https://youtu.be/7hooaj94PeM>

Harsh living conditions in the camps are among the factors contributing to / sustaining stress and trauma among refugees - according to Bitá Emmanuel, they sometimes have to go on an empty stomach for two or three days if their food ration finishes before the end of the month. We are engaging sustainable interventions to battle trauma by gearing community leaders in the refugee camps with the ability to further build capacities at various levels within their communities. Meet Bitta, Grace and Nelson from Ofua Rhino Camp. #HealingRefugee #Peace #CECI #IVAC

**South Sudan War | Refugees Trauma Healing Program**  
 Platform Africa: Introduction by Kigezo [VIDEO]  
<https://youtu.be/aB8mi9XR70>

This Training of Trainers (TOT) on trauma is a critical post-conflict action aimed at empowering/building the capacity of 25 community leaders in Rhino Camp refugee settlement to be able to respond to issues of trauma in their communities. We target the entire Rhino Camp through equipping leaders to become multipliers of the message.

**First Draft News: Vicarious Trauma Guide**  
<https://firstdraftnews.org/latest/vicarious-trauma-guide/>

**Inside Storyful: Vicarious Trauma in the Newsroom**  
<https://storyful.com/resources/blog/inside-storyful-vicarious-trauma-and-ensuring-the-well-being-of-the-newsroom/>

**DW Pakistan: Psychological Counselling for Journalists**  
<https://www.dw.com/en/pakistan-psychological-counseling-for-journalists/a-46773216>

**Trauma First Aid**  
<https://www.faith-international.net/downloads>  
<https://cdn.website-editor.net/3320dce9eaba401abb24a23965629cc3/files/uploaded/Trauma-first-aid-english.pdf>

In 2015 officially more than 65 million people worldwide were refugees. Many of them must be considered complexly traumatized by starvation, war, deep personal loss, torture, rape and other stresses of migration.

In the western countries, triage and treatment facilities after disasters are already common, in order to prevent post-traumatic stress disorders. This booklet is intended to explain scientifically-based standards of trauma first-aid. It could be used as well to train local first aid trauma-helpers, for instance in refugee camps.

We hope that information and education about the effects of traumatic exposure accompanied by appropriate primary help will contribute to dissolving the traumatic shock of so many people more quickly, so that it does not end in despair or violence. And that among the migrants themselves in the long run resources can be set free to help prevent humanitarian catastrophes of this dimension. May we all continue to believe in humanness and healing.

# NOTES & REFERENCES

## 01 SOCIAL MEDIA & CONFLICT

### SOCIAL MEDIA, CONFLICT & PEACEBUILDING IN CAMEROON

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- A tribe in Cameroon that has been in power since 1982
- A Caravan in this context is a Vehicle or group of Vehicles branded with posters and/or photos for specific purposes and used to tour the streets and create awareness on a particular theme. Sometimes, popular artists accompany the moving vehicle (s) with a trending song to pull the crowd as the vehicle passes an area with the aim of sensitising the population on a given topic. Stops are often made at the popular junctions and the population is sensitised with the use of megaphones or microphones, while the artists also entertain the crowd.

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## 02 PEACEBUILDING & SOCIAL MEDIA

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# 04 CIVIL SOCIETY & SOCIAL MEDIA

## GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ONLINE

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# CREDITS

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#defyhatenow dedicates this Field Guide to the citizens of South Sudan and Cameroon working to create a peaceful society wherever they may be.

## CAMEROON INITIATIVE 2019-2020

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# Keep spreading peace, every day of the year!

Be actively engaged in peace on a daily basis in your own life. Keep building peace within you, find peace inside your heart, and seek professional help to overcome trauma. Remember that every day you have the chance to choose peace, promote understanding, compassion and reconciliation through your own communication, experiences and interactions. Don't let anyone with a political agenda derail your efforts or divide you from peaceful intentions.

Thank you for your positive energy and contribution to making the world a more peaceful place.  
#SpreadLove #HateFreeCameroon #defyhatenow #Acts4Peace237

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