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# Understanding Prevention of Violent Extremism via Enhanced Media & Information Literacy

Individualland

Training Manual



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### About this manual

This manual serves as a comprehensive guide to understanding and addressing the complex phenomenon of violent extremism, with a focus on its ideological, psychological, and societal dimensions. It explores key principles of Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) for media professionals, emphasizing journalism's critical role in countering extremism through ethical reporting, counter-narrative building, and fostering intercultural and interfaith dialogue. The manual also delves into the impact of media narratives on public opinion and policy responses, while providing actionable insights into media information literacy (MIL), tackling misinformation and disinformation, and promoting gender-sensitive and inclusive reporting. With its practical tools and theoretical underpinnings, this manual equips readers to navigate the challenges of reporting responsibly in a rapidly evolving media landscape.

### Who can use this manual?

This manual is specifically tailored for journalists, media professionals, and media development organizations focusing on enhancing MIL skills with focus on PVE. Additionally, it can also be used by civil society and local government in their commitment to fostering informed communities and addressing the challenges posed by violent extremism. It provides each group with targeted communication strategies to enhance their roles—whether through responsible reporting, advocacy, policy implementation, or community engagement. Through its emphasis on the importance of use of innovative media tools for PVE – the manual bridges the gaps between PVE efforts of media, local government, and civil society, and empowers its users to create meaningful change, build resilience against extremism, and promote inclusive and constructive dialogue within their spheres of influence with greater outreach.

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## EPISTEMOLOGY

### Understanding Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE)

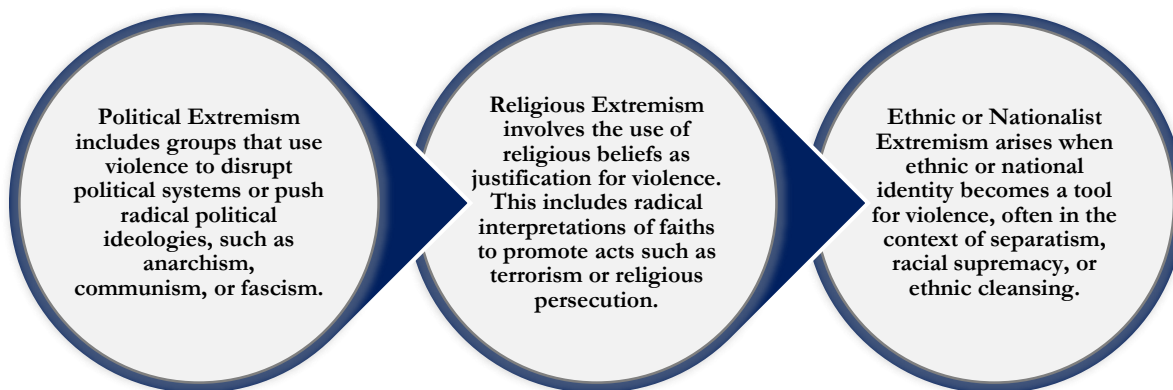
Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) is a proactive approach aimed at **addressing the root causes and drivers of violent extremism** before it escalates into terrorism or organized violence.

#### What is Violent Extremism?

**Violent extremism** refers to beliefs and actions of individuals or groups who support or use violence to achieve **ideological, religious, political, or social objectives**. It is marked by an intolerance of diversity, the rejection of peaceful dialogue, and the deliberate targeting of civilians or institutions. Unlike general extremism, which can remain confined to radical thought, **violent extremism manifests in harmful actions**.

#### Ideological Bases of Violent Extremism

Violent extremism stems from a variety of ideological bases <sup>1</sup>, often shaped by historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors:



### Drivers of Violent Extremism: (Horizontal Inequalities)

#### Socio-Economic Inequality

- Economic disparities, lack of opportunities, and systemic poverty can create feelings of resentment, making marginalized groups vulnerable to extremist narratives.

#### Political Marginalization

- Weak governance, corruption, and the exclusion of minority groups from political processes can foster alienation and push individuals toward extremist ideologies.

#### Identity Crises

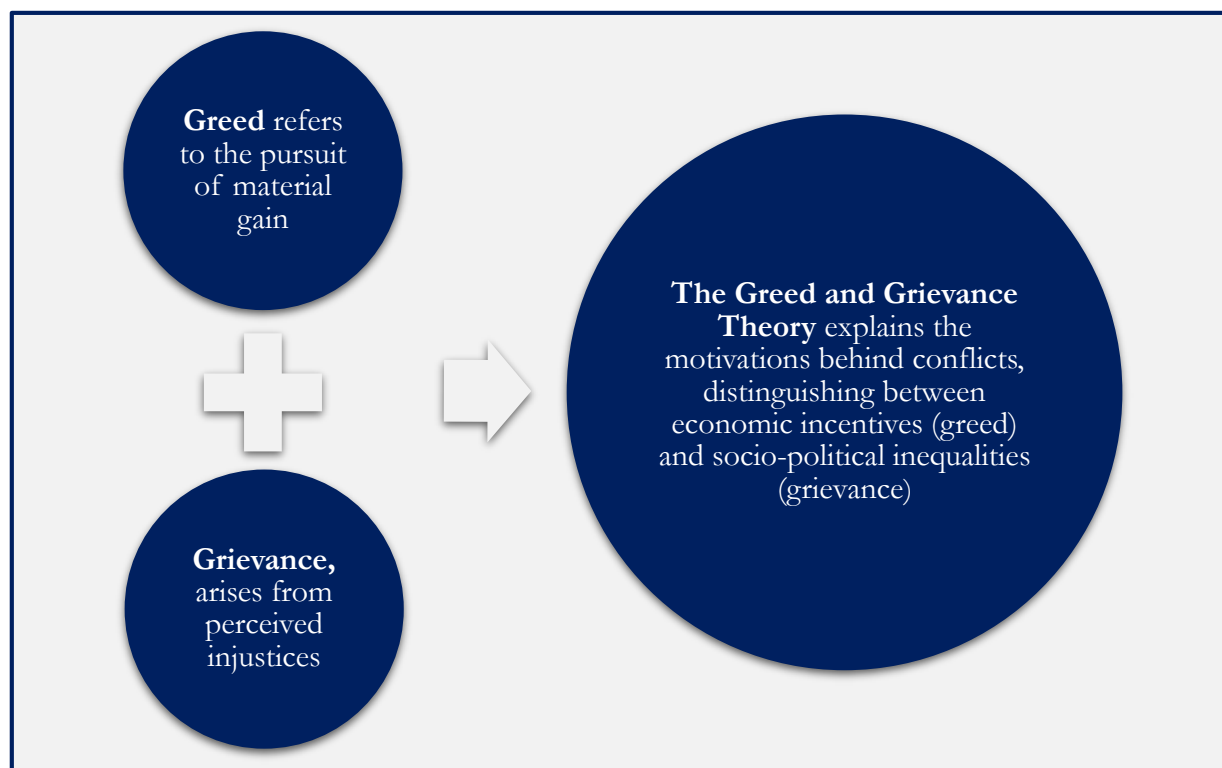
- A lack of belonging or cultural displacement, particularly among diaspora communities, can create a void that extremist groups exploit by offering a sense of purpose or identity.

#### Globalization and Technology

- While globalization has connected the world, it has also amplified the reach of extremist propaganda through social media and other digital platforms.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1057610X.2018.1543144>

## Greed & Grievance Theory:



## Greed & Grievance Theory<sup>2</sup>

### Greed

- Conflicts driven by greed often involve actors seeking to profit from the exploitation of natural resources, lucrative trade routes, or other financial gains. For instance, in resource-rich regions, factions may compete to dominate trade or resource extraction for monetary benefits, perpetuating violence to maintain their control.

### Grievance

- Arises from perceived injustices, such as ethnic or religious discrimination, political exclusion, or economic marginalization. These grievances foster resentment within marginalized groups, leading to collective actions like uprisings or rebellions.

*Example: (For the Moderator to touch upon)*

- ✓ *In South Asia, the Sri Lankan Civil War illustrates this dynamic. The Tamil minority faced systemic discrimination, political exclusion, and economic inequalities under the Sinhalese-dominated government. This sense of grievance fueled the rise of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who fought for an independent Tamil state. While grievance was the primary motivator, aspects of greed, such as the LTTE's involvement in illicit trade, also sustained the conflict, demonstrating how these factors often overlap in practice.*
- ✓ *Horizontal inequalities in Baluchistan refer to the disparities between different social, ethnic, and regional groups within the province. These inequalities manifest in areas such as access to resources, education, healthcare, employment, and political power, where the Baloch ethnic group, in particular, has historically been marginalized compared to other communities. This marginalization fuels a sense of injustice and resentment, as many Baloch feel excluded from the benefits of national development and decision-making processes. The widening gap between the Baloch and other groups can lead to a sense of alienation and frustration, creating an environment ripe for conflict and violence. If these grievances remain unaddressed, they could escalate into further unrest, with Baloch nationalist movements advocating for greater autonomy or even independence.*

### The Psychology of Violent Extremism

Understanding <sup>2</sup> the psychological processes underlying violent extremism is critical for developing effective PVE strategies:

<b>Cognitive Biases:</b>	<b>Radicalization Pathways:</b>	<b>Psychology of Recruitment:</b>
<p><b>Confirmation Bias:</b> Individuals seek information that reinforces their pre-existing beliefs, often ignoring contradictory evidence.</p> <p><b>Black-and-White Thinking:</b> Extremist ideologies thrive on oversimplified worldviews, framing conflicts as absolute struggles between good and evil.</p>	<p>Radicalization is a process by which individuals adopt extremist ideologies and, eventually, violent methods. This can occur through:</p> <p>Personal grievances, such as trauma or perceived injustice.</p> <p>Exposure to radical narratives, often through social networks or online content.</p> <p>Isolation from diverse perspectives, leading to a hardened worldview.</p>	<p>Extremist groups use sophisticated psychological tactics to recruit followers, including:</p> <p><b>Appeals to Identity:</b> Offering a sense of belonging to individuals feeling alienated.</p> <p><b>Manipulation of Emotions:</b> Exploiting feelings of anger, fear, or humiliation to radicalize individuals.</p> <p><b>Promise of Empowerment:</b> Extremist narratives often portray violence as a means to reclaim power or dignity.</p>

<sup>2</sup> <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/understanding-violent-extremism-the-social-psychology-of-identity-and-group-dynamics/>



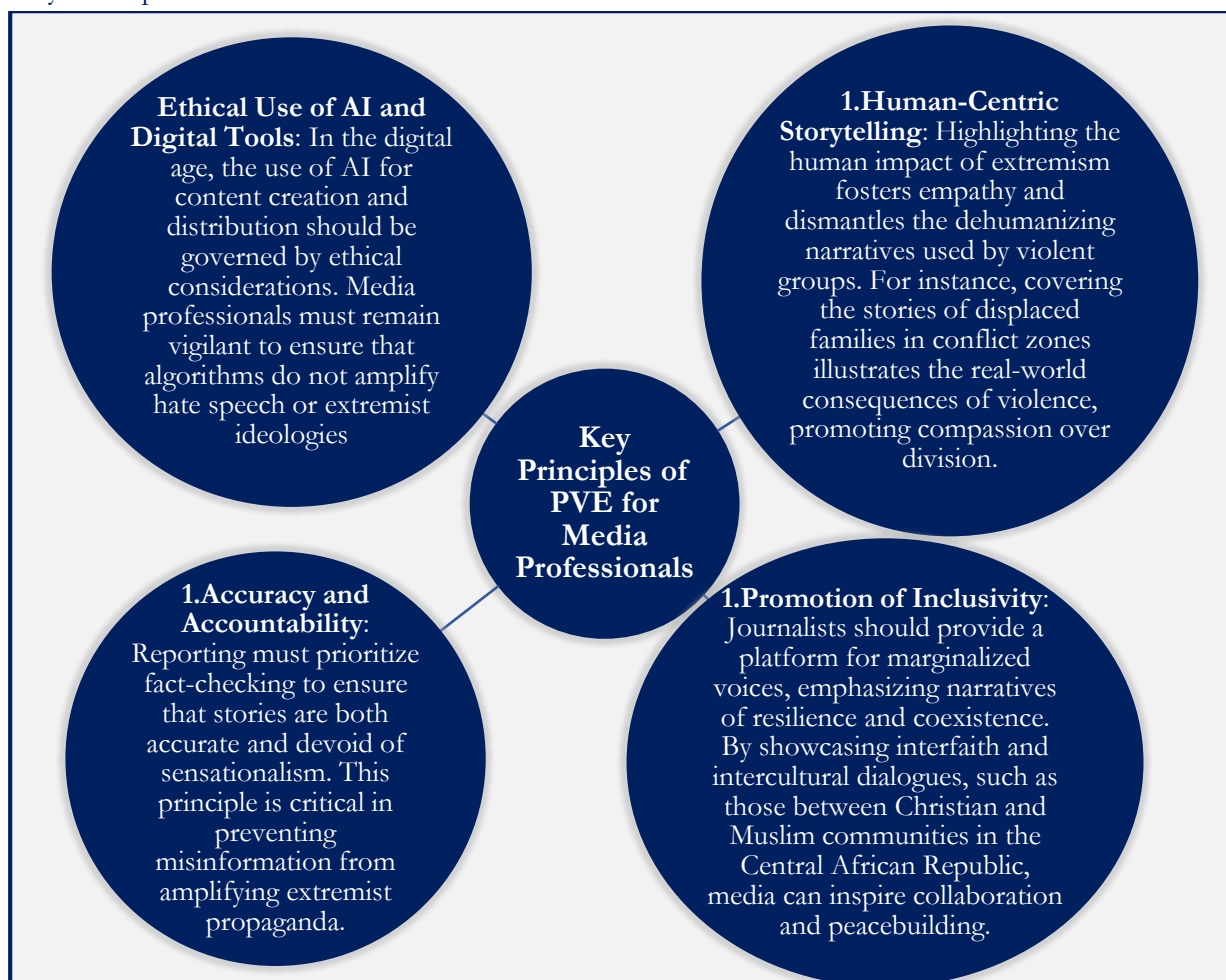
### Why PVE Matters for Journalism

Journalism plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion and societal narratives, making it a critical tool in PVE efforts. The media's capacity to influence perceptions underscores its responsibility to avoid sensationalism and instead focus on constructive reporting. Misrepresentation or stereotyping in media coverage can exacerbate divisions, while balanced and factual journalism can foster understanding and unity.

**Note for Moderator:**

For example, the role of journalists in Rwanda during the genocide highlights the dangers of inflammatory reporting, while post-genocide, constructive media initiatives have been instrumental in reconciliation efforts. (<https://idrc-rdci.ca/en/book/media-and-rwanda-genocide>) In a world where extremist groups increasingly exploit digital platforms to spread propaganda, journalism has the unique capacity to counteract these narratives with credible, factual, and human-centered storytelling.

### Key Principles of PVE for Media Professionals





## Note for Trainer:

The trainer should highlight the portrayal of Waziristan and the newly merged districts in the media, emphasizing how they are often depicted negatively, focusing mainly on conflict and militancy. While these issues are significant, it is important to also bring attention to positive stories, such as local development, community resilience, and efforts toward peacebuilding.

---

### Journalism as a Tool to Counter Extremism

#### Counter Narrative-Building

Extremist ideologies thrive on divisive and often false narratives. Journalism can effectively dismantle these by promoting counter-narratives that emphasize shared humanity, democratic values, and inclusivity. For instance, Frontline’s initiatives to produce counter-narratives against ISIS propaganda have highlighted the real-life suffering caused by the group, undermining its recruitment efforts. (**“Life after ISIS” storytelling series**)<sup>3</sup>

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#### Promoting Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue

Journalists can bridge divides by highlighting stories of unity across religious and cultural boundaries. For example, media coverage of initiatives like the **“Shoulder to Shoulder”** campaign in the United States, which unites interfaith communities to combat anti-Muslim bigotry, demonstrates the power of dialogue to counter prejudice and foster solidarity.<sup>4</sup>

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#### Highlighting the Human Impact

Reporting on the lived experiences of those affected by extremism helps humanize victims and challenge the facelessness of such violence. Stories like those of Malala Yousafzai, who survived a Taliban attack and became a global advocate for girls’ education. TCM’s Drone Files series as well as The Guantanamo & Bagram Files series can also serve as an example.

This analysis can be displayed at the work shop indicating human impact stories:

<https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2022/afghanistan-people-behind-the-numbers/>

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### Ethical Considerations in Reporting on Extremism

Reporting on extremism poses significant ethical challenges, requiring journalists to navigate the delicate balance between informing the public and preventing harm. By adhering to ethical guidelines, journalists can report responsibly while contributing to informed public discourse.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uvipYMuHeQ>

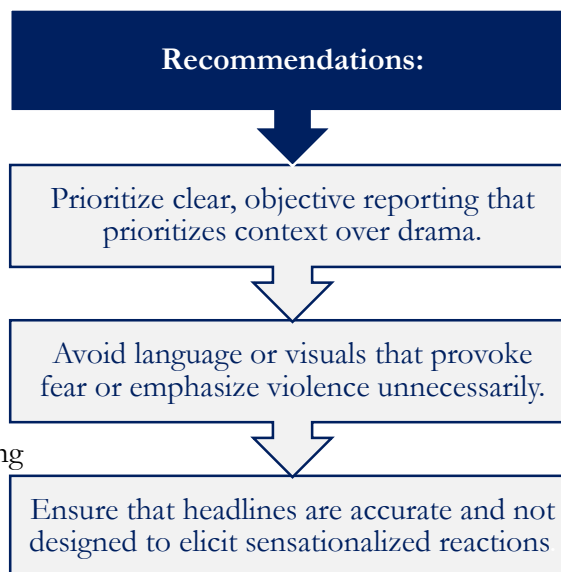
<sup>4</sup> <https://www.shouldertoshouldercampaign.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09546553.2021.1880235#d1e147>

**Key ethical considerations in this context:**

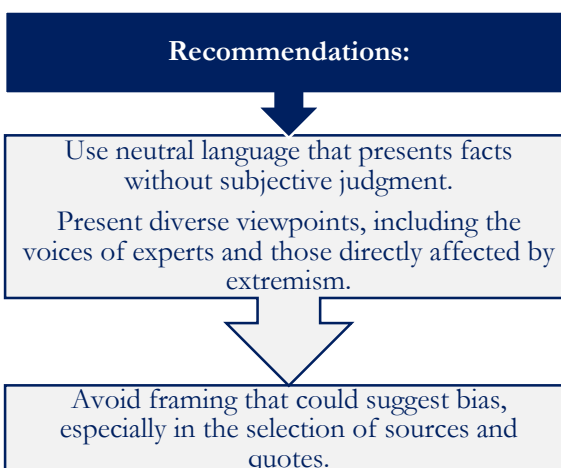
**1. Avoiding Sensationalism in Extremism Coverage**

Sensationalist coverage of extremism can exacerbate social divisions, reinforce harmful stereotypes, and spread undue fear. It is essential for journalists to avoid exaggerated language and graphic imagery that could contribute to a distorted perception of events or individuals. Sensationalism often focuses on **violence for shock value** rather than informative content, thereby potentially fueling extremist agendas and escalating tensions. Ethical reporting should strive to provide factual, contextualized information that avoids glorifying violence or perpetuating misconceptions.



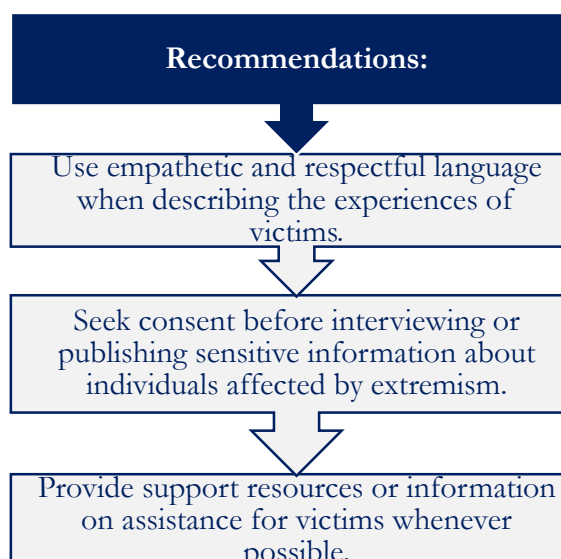
**2. Maintaining Neutrality and Objectivity**

Journalists must maintain neutrality and objectivity to foster trust and credibility. This neutrality helps prevent the stigmatization of entire communities or the reinforcement of biases that might lead to societal polarization. Objectivity requires that **reporters cover events from multiple perspectives, avoiding biases** that could portray one group as inherently good or bad. Ensuring that all sides of a story are represented fairly promotes balanced narratives and prevents the media from acting as an echo chamber for any particular ideology.



**3. Reporting with Sensitivity towards Victims and Marginalized Communities**

Victims of extremism, as well as marginalized communities affected by such violence, should be reported on with the utmost sensitivity. This includes acknowledging their trauma while avoiding depictions that could exploit their suffering for dramatic impact. It is crucial to respect the dignity of victims and prevent further victimization through invasive questioning or the publication of graphic content that may retraumatize those involved. (Examples: APS attack interviews of parents)

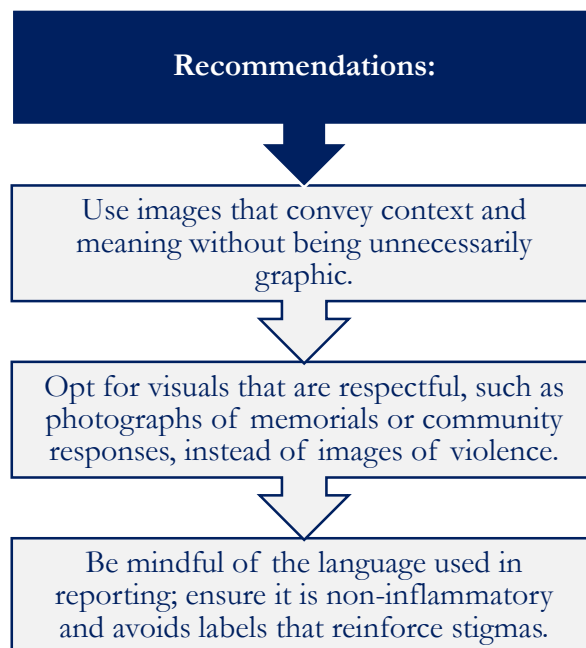


#### 4. Ethical Use of Imagery and Language

The visual and verbal elements of reporting can profoundly shape public understanding and reaction to extremism. Images and language should be chosen carefully to avoid contributing to stigmatization or inciting violence. Graphic or violent imagery, for instance, can desensitize audiences or be misused by extremist groups for propaganda. Likewise, language that reinforces negative stereotypes or fuels hate can perpetuate harmful biases and hinder efforts to build understanding.

##### Note for Trainer:

The trainer can use various examples from National publications on the portrayal of NMD's for a more contextualized discussion.



- ✓ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1834703>
- ✓ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1657328>
- ✓ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1760471>
- ✓ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1154019>

#### Shaping Public Opinion Through Media Narratives

Media outlets have significant power in constructing narratives that shape public perceptions. In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, American media outlets like BBC, CNN, and Fox News were instrumental in creating a narrative that framed the event as a clash between the Western world and an undefined, monolithic **“other,”** often painting Muslims and countries like Pakistan in a negative light.

This type of framing had real-world consequences, influencing public sentiment and creating a climate of fear and suspicion. As a result, policies were crafted with a heightened focus on security, often at the expense of civil liberties, and a view of Muslims and Pakistanis as potential threats became normalized in some communities. Such reporting not only stigmatized entire populations but also led to policies that often overlooked the underlying causes of extremism.

##### Note for Moderator:

The portrayal of Muslims as extremists or terrorists was perpetuated, reinforcing harmful stereotypes, and contributing to an “Us vs. Them” mentality that deepened societal divisions. The trainer can ask the participants what other “Us vs. Them” perspective they can think of.



### Localized example:

The media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion by highlighting social issues and influencing discourse, as demonstrated in the **Mashal Khan case**. According to a research, leading English-language newspapers in Pakistan, including **The News, Dawn, and The Nation, published a total of thirty-four editorials between April 13, 2017, and April 13, 2018**, condemning the brutal killing of Mashal Khan. The editorials focused on themes like mob violence, blasphemy accusations, religious intolerance, and poor law enforcement. These newspapers labeled the act as premeditated murder, called for amendments to blasphemy laws, and urged the abolition of mob justice.

For instance, **The Nation published sixteen editorials** discussing religious intolerance and poor governance, while **The News focused on law and order in its ten editorials, and Dawn examined mob justice and the need for legal reforms in its eight pieces**. By condemning the violence and advocating for systemic changes, the media not only raised awareness about societal issues but also influenced public discourse, emphasizing justice and minority protection. <sup>6</sup>

#### A brief description of the case:

The Mashal Khan case in Mardan involved the brutal mob lynching of a university student, Mashal Khan, on April 13, 2017, at Abdul Wali Khan University. He was falsely accused of blasphemy, sparking outrage across Pakistan. Investigations later revealed no evidence of blasphemy, and the incident highlighted issues of mob violence, misuse of blasphemy laws, and the need for justice reforms.

### More for the trainer to touch upon: *SCN City spotlight of Mardan*

The tragic lynching of Mashal Khan, a university student in Mardan, is referenced in governmental and policy discussions as a stark reminder of the challenges facing the region. Highlighted in the context of peace, security, and social cohesion, the incident made international headlines and underscored the urgent need for addressing extremism and fostering resilience. It is cited in official narratives as an example of the pressing need for local government mandates focused on violence prevention, inclusivity, and capacity-building to counter such incidents and promote a tolerant and peaceful society. <sup>7</sup>

### The Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists (International Federation of Journalists):

The Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists <sup>8</sup> touches on privacy, particularly in Article 8 and Article 14:

#### Article 8:

Journalists are required to respect the privacy and dignity of individuals, including informing interviewees whether their statements are intended for publication. They must show consideration for vulnerable and inexperienced interviewees, which implies ensuring their safety and protecting their identities when necessary.

<sup>6</sup>

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363250721> Mashal Khan case A comparative analysis of newspaper editorial

<sup>7</sup>

<https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/resource/city-spotlight-city-of-mardan-pakistan/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ifj.org/who/rules-and-policy/global-charter-of-ethics-for-journalists>

## Article 14:

Journalists are expected to respect methods like "off the record," anonymity, or embargo agreements. This indicates an obligation to protect confidential sources and ensure privacy where agreed upon.

These provisions underscore the importance of protecting the identity and privacy of those interviewed, particularly in sensitive situations.

### Note for Trainer:

For additional focus, it would be worthwhile to expand on how these ethical principles are practically implemented, such as anonymizing names and contexts to safeguard individuals.

### Safeguarding and Security of Journalists <sup>9</sup>:

*Journalist Safety Guidelines:*

#### Pre-Assignment Preparation

Conduct a thorough risk assessment for potential hazards in the field.

If possible, attend any Hostile Environment and First Aid Training (HEFAT).

#### Physical Safety Measures

Use protective gear like helmets, gas masks, and first-aid kits. (The institute must provide with these things but if not, then the journalist should himself own these standard equipment)

Maintain situational awareness and have an emergency evacuation plan.

#### Digital Security

Use encrypted communication tools and VPNs to safeguard sensitive information.

Protect data with strong passwords, software updates, and phishing awareness.

#### Psychosocial Care

Seek mental health support when dealing with high-stress assignments.

Prioritize self-care through regular meals, sleep, and exercise.

#### Legal and Ethical Considerations

Understand your legal rights and protections as a journalist.

Follow ethical standards like anonymity agreements and respect for privacy.

Always identify yourself when the need be, so the other knows that you are a "journalist".

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<sup>9</sup> <https://cpj.org/emergency-response/pre-assignment-preparations>



## The Media's Role in Influencing Policy Responses to Extremism

Media coverage can drive policy change by framing issues as urgent or threatening. Following 9/11, the widespread media coverage of terrorism led to the implementation of the USA PATRIOT Act and policies that increased surveillance and security measures. These were responses influenced by the pressure of public opinion, which was heavily shaped by media narratives of an impending threat from extremist groups. Similarly, in Pakistan, the brutal lynching of Mashal Khan received extensive media coverage, which spurred public outrage and led to increased scrutiny of mob violence and hate speech. Likewise, documentaries (Sharmeen Obaid's) highlighting acid attacks on women have been instrumental in raising awareness, leading to stricter laws and better support systems for survivors.<sup>10 11</sup>

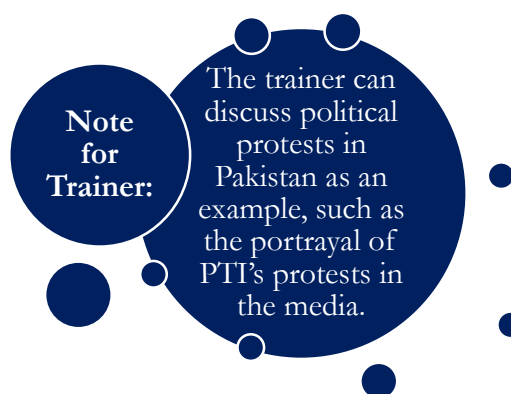
### Media-Driven Perception Shifts

The media's impact on public perception can be observed in the shift in how Muslims and Pakistan were perceived in the early 2000s. For instance, coverage on Fox News and CNN regularly linked Islam with violence and radicalism, which perpetuated negative stereotypes. This framing contributed to policies that prioritized counterterrorism but overlooked more nuanced approaches to addressing the root causes of extremism, such as socio-economic inequality and political disenfranchisement.<sup>12</sup>

While there are positive examples of media fostering dialogue and understanding, the negative impacts—such as the stigmatization of entire communities—illustrate the power of media to mislead and reinforce biases. Responsible media reporting is essential to counteract these effects, promoting an inclusive narrative that recognizes the diversity and complexity of affected communities.

### Topic for Discussion:

**No coverage of Imran Khan's PTI protests:** Pakistani media told to censor popular ex-PM; Several journalists say they have been asked to impose near-blanket ban on the political party's coverage ahead of February 8 elections.<sup>13</sup>



<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-17180530>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.dw.com/en/liberals-in-pakistan-fear-hate-crimes-following-lynching-victim-mashal-khans-death/a-48022110>

<sup>12</sup> <https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5437&context=flr>

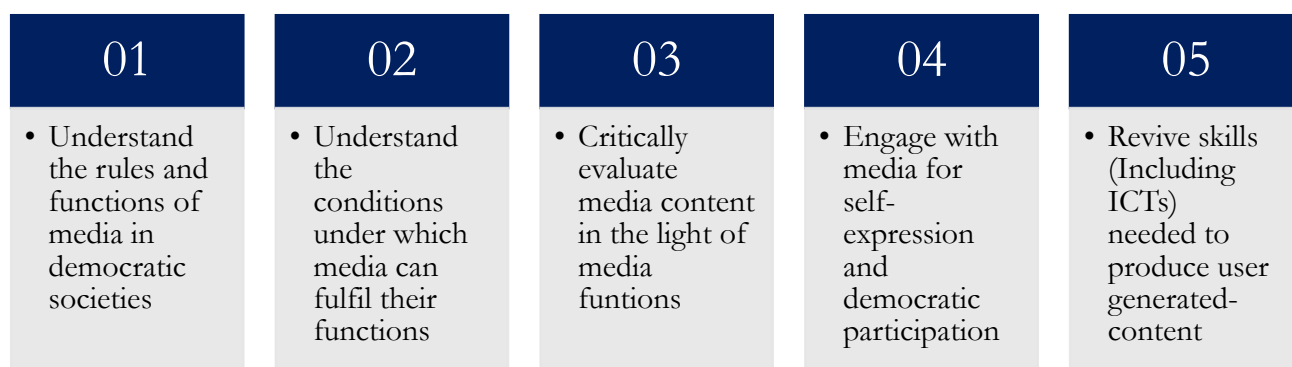
<sup>13</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2024/1/25/dont-cover-imran-khans-pti-pakistans-media-told-to-censor-popular-ex-pm>



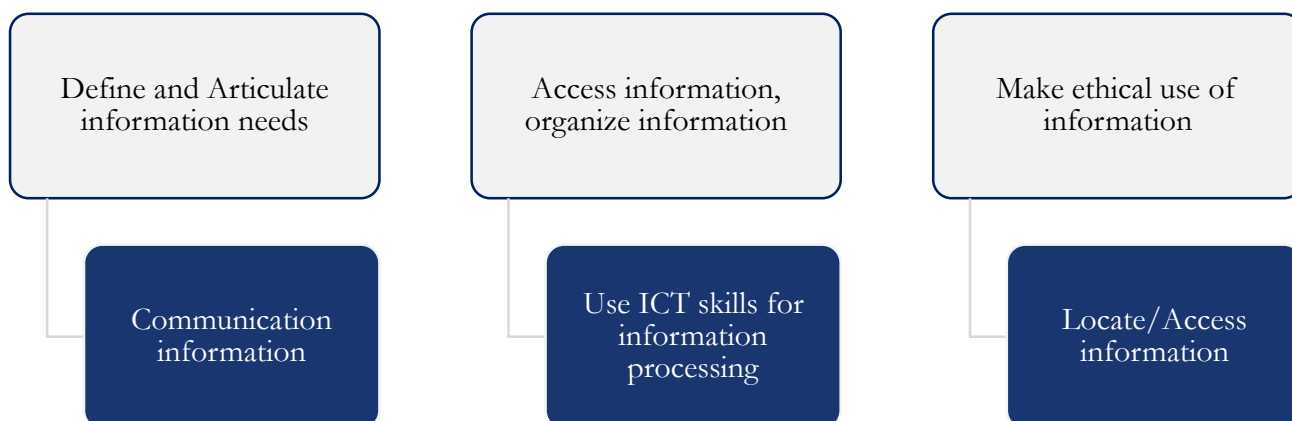
### Theoretical Understanding of Media Information Literacy

Media and information literacy is of increased significance today as it enables individuals to understand and effectively utilise every type of media. Therefore, media and information literacy of an individual, is **“a set of competencies that empowers citizens to access, retrieve, understand, evaluate and use, to create as well as share information and media content in all formats, using various tools, in a critical, ethical and effective way, in order to participate and engage in personal, professional and societal activities.”** It is important to mention that MIL is an umbrella term for two distinct areas i.e. (1) media literacy and (2) information literacy. For a thorough understanding of the umbrella term, it is essential to elaborate upon both forms of literacy separately.

**Media Literacy:** Media Literacy encompasses the ability to understand media functions, evaluate how these functions are performed, and rationally engage with media for self-expression.



**Information Literacy:** Information Literacy essentially emphasises upon the significance of access to information, its evaluation, and its ethical use: <sup>14</sup>



MIL, essentially, provides individuals with understanding regarding; (1) how to access, search, critically assess, wisely use and contribute content in both online and offline spheres, (2) what the online and offline rights of individuals regarding freedom of speech and expression are, (3) what the ethical issues regarding access to and use of information are, and (4) how to promote freedom of expression and free access to information, as well as dialogue on peace-building and social cohesion via offline and online spheres. Thus, MIL significantly contributes to promoting freedom of expression and free access to information in democratic milieu for social and civic participation.

<sup>14</sup> [https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000192971\\_eng](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000192971_eng)

## MIL vis-à-vis Information Disorder

MIL is an essential tool used for checking the authenticity and credibility of information, as well as understanding the ethical use of information at hand. Thus, MIL plays a significant role in identifying and countering misinformation, disinformation, mal-information, fake news, and doctored visuals (images and videos) that contribute to social and cultural stigmas, stereotypes, intolerance, incitement of violence, hate speech, political polarization, and infringement of basic human rights like freedom of expression and access to information. MIL overcomes this dis-infodemic via verification, fact-checking, and combating online and offline hate speech/ abuse by promoting ethical and responsible sharing of information. To utilise MIL for this purpose, it is essential to be familiar with different concepts like fake news, information disorder, etc.

## Fake News and Information Disorder

Fake news is “**information deliberately fabricated and published with the intention to deceive and mislead others into believing falsehoods or doubting verifiable facts.**”<sup>15</sup> The discourse of fake news encompasses three notions that are considered as the information disorder,<sup>16</sup> including **misinformation**, **disinformation**, and **mal-information**. These notions are distinguished on the basis of truth/falsehood of information, and information created and shared with intent of harm.

1. **Disinformation:** “*Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country*”.<sup>18</sup>

In 2019, an image, purportedly a screenshot of a newspaper, reporting the arrest of an Israeli pilot in Pakistan was shared by different Facebook pages more than a thousand times. The information was ratified as false; the image was a doctored screenshot of a news report on IAF helicopter crash incident in 2013 from an Israeli newspaper.<sup>17</sup>

2. **Disinformation:** “*Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country*”.<sup>19</sup>

In 2018, deaths of 3 children in KP after the administration of anti-polio drive were allegedly blamed on the polio vaccination. This incident struck panic regarding the anti-polio drive in KP; however, investigations revealed the deaths were not linked to polio virus or its vaccination.<sup>20</sup>

3. **Mal-information:** “*Information that is based on reality, used to inflict harm on a person, organization or country*”.<sup>21</sup>

In June 2020, a video clip had gone viral that showed violence and threats inflicted on a Pakistani model and her sister by women and armed men associated with a reputable family. The video sparked harassment and sympathy, simultaneously, for the victims of violence and perpetrators of violence.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>15</sup> <https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/tag/fake-news/page/4>

<sup>16</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/information-disorder-report-november-2017/1680764666>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/448082-news-of-israeli-pilot-s-arrest-in-pakistan-is-fake>

<sup>18</sup> <https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/tag/fake-news/page/4>

<sup>19</sup> <https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/tag/fake-news/page/4>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1404945>

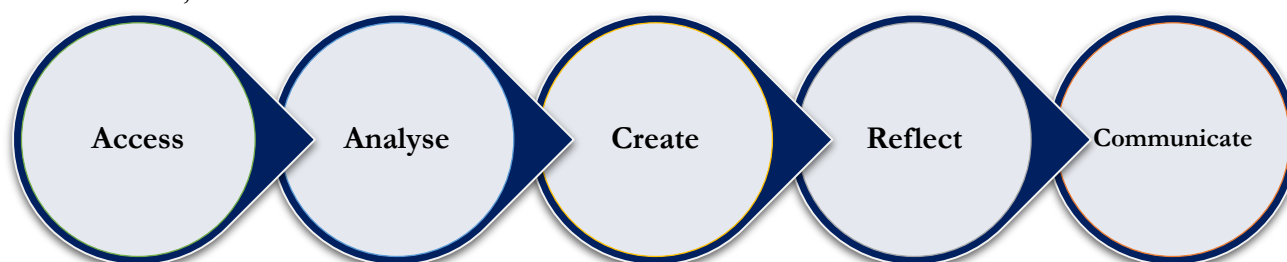
<sup>21</sup> <https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/tag/fake-news/page/4>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1560861>

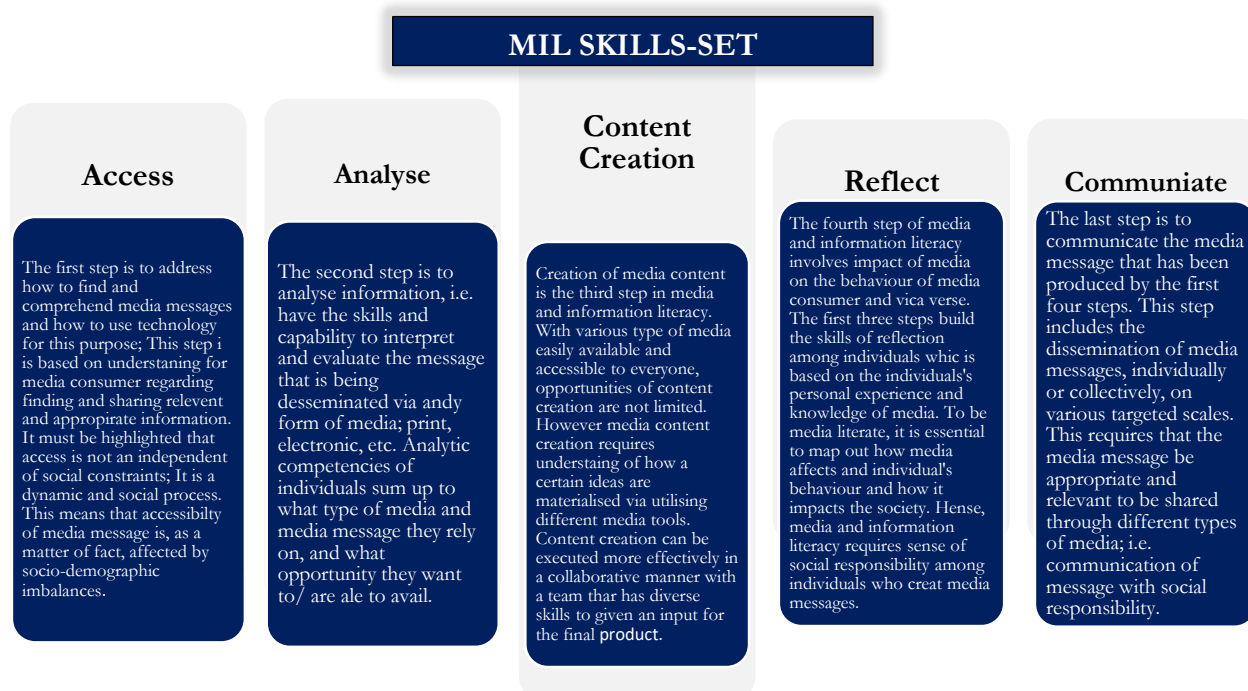
FALSE		INTENT TO HARM
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Misinformation	<input type="checkbox"/> Dis-information	<input type="checkbox"/> Mal-information
<input type="checkbox"/> False connection	<input type="checkbox"/> False Context	<input type="checkbox"/> (Some) Leaks
<input type="checkbox"/> Misleading Content	<input type="checkbox"/> Inposter Content	<input type="checkbox"/> (Some) Harassment
	<input type="checkbox"/> Manipulated Content	<input type="checkbox"/> (Some) Hate speech
	<input type="checkbox"/> Fabricated Content	

MIL skill set:

MIL can be utilised as a tool for stimulating critical empathy in the online sphere, eventually cutting across in offline sphere. Thus, MIL empowers individuals to access information, critically evaluate it, and contribute to the narrative wisely. MIL is about skills that ordinary individuals need to understand and effectively use media and information sources. The skill set required for media and information literacy is 5-dimensional, i.e.



This 5-dimensional skill set assists in; (a) learning the art of critical thinking, (b) understand media’s cultural and societal role, (c) recognise aim of media messages, (d) see through bias, misinformation and false narratives, (e) understand digital privacy and security, and (f) create and disseminate responsible content.

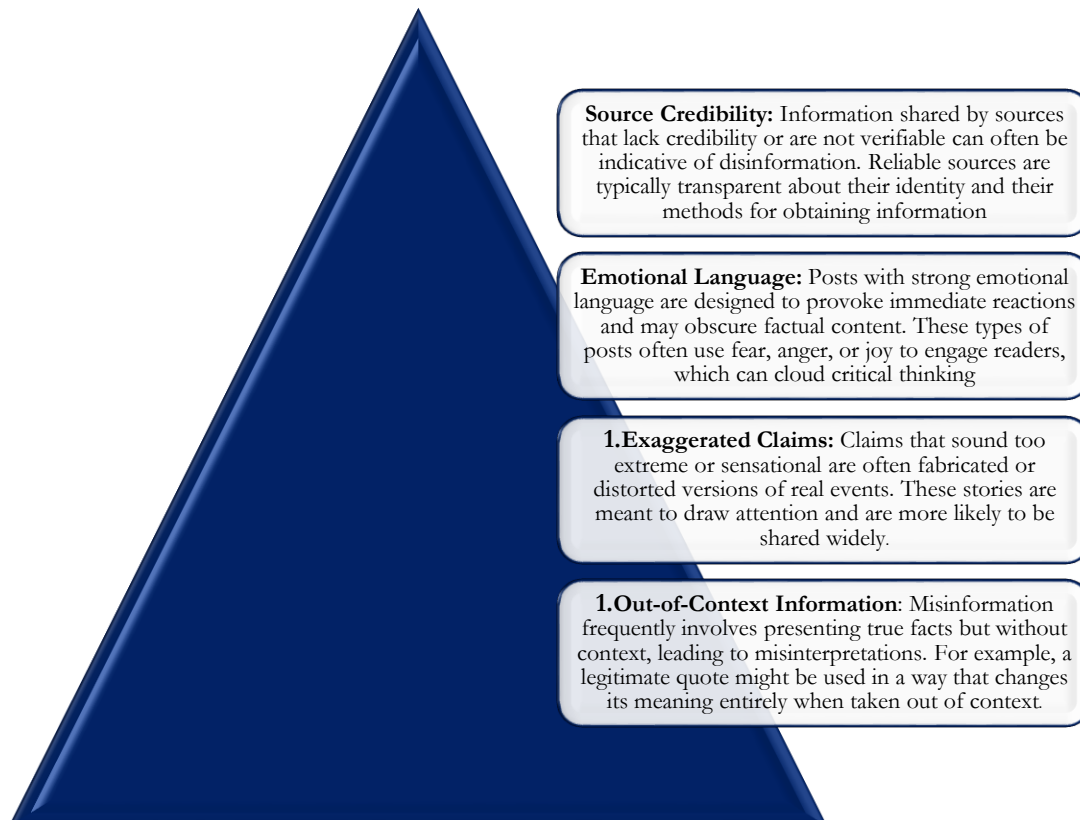


## Identifying and Countering Misinformation and Disinformation

### Understanding Misinformation and Disinformation

As discussed above, Misinformation and disinformation refer to false or misleading information spread either without intent to deceive (misinformation) or with deliberate intent to deceive (disinformation). Recognizing these is crucial for ensuring the integrity of information, particularly as misinformation can lead to public confusion, polarization, and social unrest.

### Key Characteristics of Misinformation



### Fact-Checking Techniques

1. Cross-Referencing with Trusted Sources: To determine the authenticity of a piece of information, verify it by comparing it with reputable and reliable news outlets, government websites, or well-known fact-checking organizations like Snopes, FactCheck.org, or PolitiFact.
2. Reverse Image Search: This tool helps trace the original use of an image. Using services like Google Images or TinEye, you can determine if an image has been repurposed or manipulated, identifying its true source and context.
3. Checking the Publication Date: Sometimes outdated information resurfaces, misleading readers into thinking it is current. Always verify the date of publication to ensure relevancy.
4. Reading Beyond Headlines: Headlines are designed to grab attention but often contain exaggerated claims. Reading the full article provides a clearer picture and helps identify misleading or biased content.

### Countering Misinformation

**Community Reporting:** Social media platforms and messaging apps often have built-in tools for reporting false content. Encouraging community members to report suspicious or false information can prevent it from spreading further.

**Transparency in Sharing Information:** Media outlets and influencers should prioritize transparency by disclosing the sources of their information and clarifying any potential biases. This builds trust and helps the public discern credible information from misleading content.

**Engagement with Technology:** Using digital tools such as browser extensions like NewsGuard or Factmata can aid in identifying unreliable sources and flagging false content as it is encountered.

### Fact-Checking Techniques/Digital Tools for Investigative Journalism

Some basic to advance level tools for Fact-checking can be shared, such as

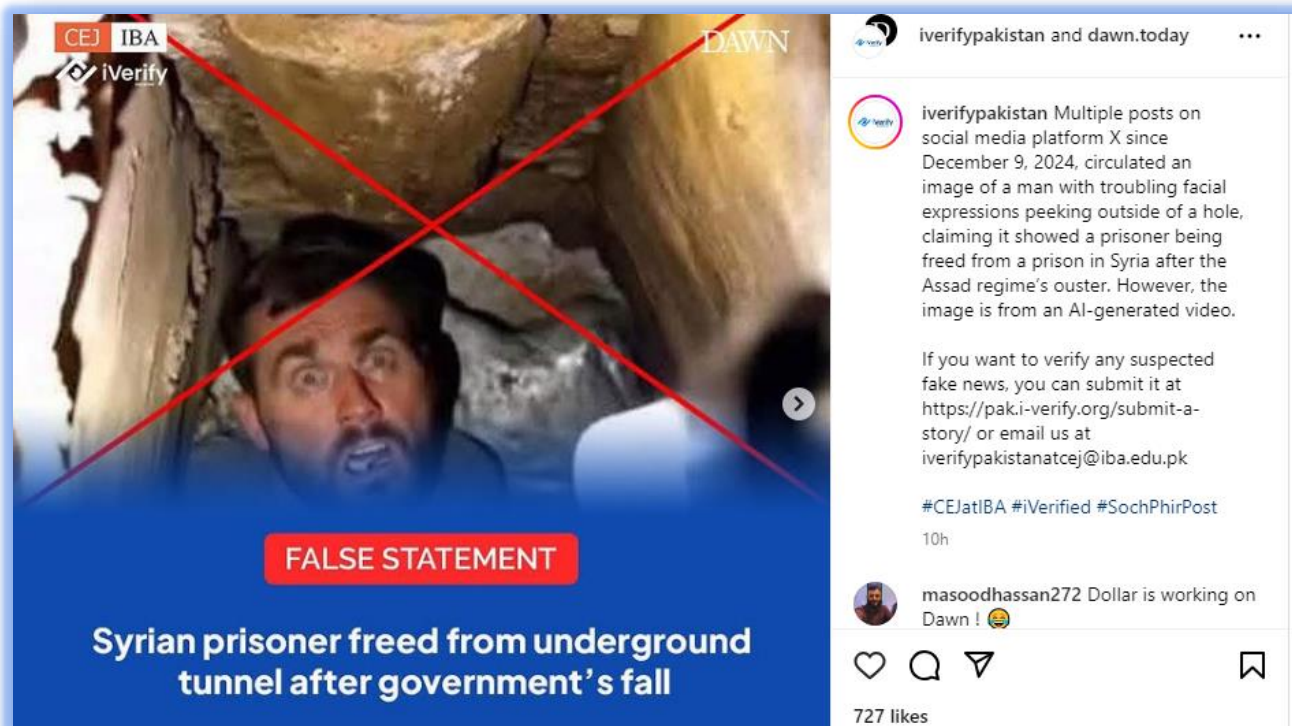
- **Reverse Image Search** (e.g., Google Reverse Image Search, TinEye)
- **Data Validation Tools** (e.g., Data & Research Repositories, FactCheck.org)
- **Browser Extensions for Fact-Checking** (e.g., NewsGuard, PolitiFact)
- **Cross-Referencing Information Using Multiple Sources**
- **Digital Forensics Tools** (e.g., InVID, Amnesty International's YouTube DataViewer)
- **Audio and Video Verification** (e.g., Audacity, Video Evidence Verification Platforms)
- **Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) Tools** (e.g., Maltego, OSINT Framework)
- **Social Media Monitoring and Analysis** (e.g., CrowdTangle, Hoaxy)
- **Blockchain Verification for News Content** (e.g., Civil, Po.et)
- **Advanced Search Techniques** (e.g., Boolean Search Operators, Advanced Google Search)
- **Verification of Public Records and Government Databases**
- **Collaboration with Peer Fact-Checkers and Fact-Checking Networks** (e.g., International Fact-Checking Network, FactCheck.org)
- **AI-Powered Fact-Checking Tools** (e.g., ClaimReview, IBM Watson for Natural Language Processing)



### 1. Note for Trainer:

The trainer can discuss various examples on social media regarding Fake News. For example:

- ✓ [https://www.instagram.com/iverifypakistan/p/DDY9P5CiPoo/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/iverifypakistan/p/DDY9P5CiPoo/?img_index=1)
- ✓ [https://www.instagram.com/iverifypakistan/p/DDJ9Ik4iwVo/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/iverifypakistan/p/DDJ9Ik4iwVo/?img_index=1)
- ✓ [https://www.instagram.com/iverifypakistan/p/DDeVN3rCRl9/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/iverifypakistan/p/DDeVN3rCRl9/?img_index=1)



### Gender-Sensitive and Inclusive Reporting in Addressing Violent Extremism

Gender-sensitive and inclusive reporting is critical in tackling the impact of violent extremism (VE) and its portrayal in media narratives. While violent extremism affects all members of society, women and marginalized communities often experience its consequences in distinct ways. For example, women are not only victims of VE but are increasingly involved as both perpetrators and key actors in preventing and countering radicalization. However, their contributions are frequently overlooked in traditional media, which can perpetuate stereotypes and limit public understanding.

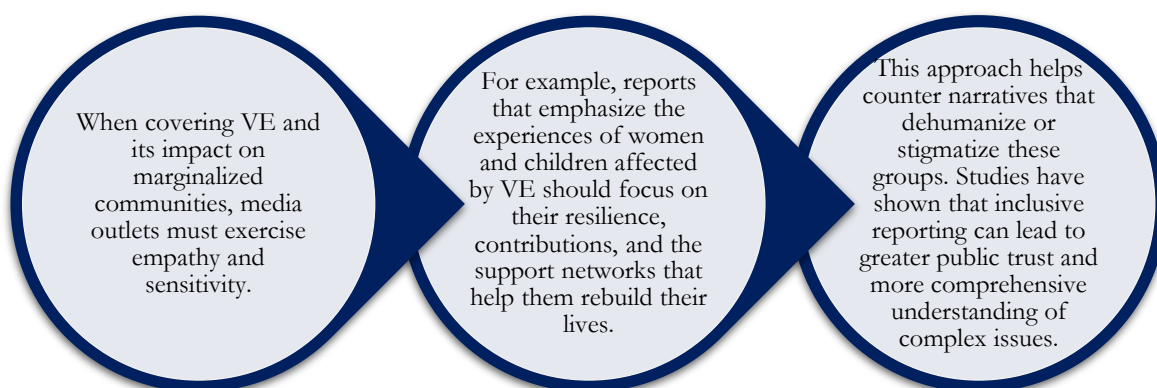
### Inclusive Language and Representation





The use of language and visual representation in reporting is essential for promoting inclusivity. The media has the power to shape public perception, and terms that reinforce gender bias or victim-blaming should be avoided. For instance, framing women in conflict zones solely as passive victims reinforces stereotypes that exclude their agency and contributions. In contrast, stories that feature women's leadership, such as those of Nobel laureate Leymah Gbowee and female peacekeepers in conflict areas, provide a more accurate depiction and inspire greater engagement in gender-sensitive reporting. There are very few news stories on conflict and war including women's voices, underscoring the need for more inclusive reporting.

### Reporting with Empathy and Sensitivity



### Women positive stories example in peacebuilding:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w13xtvmv>

#### Key Practices for Gender-Sensitive Reporting:

**Diversify sources:** Include voices from various genders, ethnicities, and communities to capture a full range of perspectives.

**Use gender-neutral language:** Avoid biased terminology and opt for inclusive language that respects all genders.

**Incorporate inclusive imagery:** Use photos and visuals that represent women, trans individuals, and marginalized groups as multidimensional and active participants in society.

**Highlight achievements:** Showcase the successes and contributions of women and other underrepresented groups to break down stereotypes and promote equality.

**Empathize with subjects:** Approach stories with an understanding of the context and experiences of the people involved, ensuring respectful and fair representation.

## Other definitions:

### Sex vs. Gender

#### Sex

- Refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define humans as male, female, or intersex.
- It is assigned at birth based on physical attributes such as reproductive organs, chromosomes, and hormone levels.
- Examples: male, female, intersex.

#### Gender

- Refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, expressions, and identities that a society considers appropriate for men, women, and non-binary people.
- It is a cultural and social concept that can vary across societies and change over time.
- Examples: masculine, feminine, non-binary, genderqueer.

## Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are generalized views or preconceptions about the attributes, characteristics, or roles that are traditionally or socially assigned to men and women. These stereotypes can be harmful, limiting individual potential and perpetuating inequalities.

### Examples

Men are expected to be strong, unemotional, and dominant.

Women are seen as nurturing, emotional, and passive.

### Impacts

Reinforce discrimination and limit opportunities for both men and women.

Influence societal norms, workplace dynamics, and personal relationships.

## Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy aimed at achieving gender equality by integrating a gender perspective into all levels of policy-making, planning, and program implementation.

It ensures that gender equality considerations are central to decision-making processes.

- 1.Key Elements**
- 2.Integration:** Embedding gender perspectives in policies, programs, and projects across sectors.
- 3.Analysis:** Assessing the different impacts of proposed actions on women and men.
- 4.Participation:** Encouraging the involvement of both women and men in planning and decision-making.

## Example in Practice

In development projects, gender mainstreaming involves ensuring equal access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for men and women.

## Significance

1. Promotes equality and inclusivity.
2. Improves the effectiveness and sustainability of policies and programs by addressing the needs of all genders.

## Campaign Design

Campaign design is the process of planning and executing actions to achieve specific objectives, such as marketing, advocacy, or awareness. A successful digital campaign leverages online platforms to engage the target audience, drive action, and deliver measurable results.

### Key Elements of Campaign Design:

- **Clear Objectives:** Set clear, measurable goals that align with your overall objectives, such as raising awareness or increasing sales. Use analytics tools to track progress and adjust the campaign for better results.
- **Target Audience:** Identify who your audience is and where they are online. Segment your audience by demographics, interests, and behaviors to tailor your messaging more effectively.
- **Compelling Message:** Create a message that resonates with your target audience, addressing their needs and interests. Ensure the message is actionable, guiding the audience on what to do next.
- **Platform Selection:** Choose platforms where your target audience is most active, such as Instagram for younger users or LinkedIn for professionals. Align your platform choices with audience preferences.
- **Creative Strategy and Content:** Design engaging, visually appealing content tailored to the strengths of each platform. Use videos, graphics, and interactive elements to capture attention.
- **Call to Action (CTA):** Every campaign should have a clear, actionable CTA, whether it is encouraging users to visit a website, donate, or share content.
- **Budget and Resource Allocation:** Plan your resources carefully, considering the costs for paid ads, content creation, and tools. Be realistic about your budget to maximize campaign effectiveness.
- **Monitoring and Optimization:** Use real-time data to track key metrics like engagement and conversions. Adjust the campaign based on performance to optimize results.
- **Evaluation and Reporting:** After the campaign ends, assess its effectiveness by reviewing data such as audience feedback, conversion rates, and engagement. Use these insights to improve future campaigns.

## Workshop Agenda

### Day 1 Understanding Prevention of Violent Extremism

Time	activities <sup>23</sup>
9:00-9:30 AM	Registration
9:30-10:00 AM	Welcome note and Introduction Brief ice breaker with UNODC representative
10:00-11:00 AM	Understanding PVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Theory</li> <li>✓ Psychology</li> <li>✓ Ideology</li> <li>✓ Discussion on local contexts</li> </ul>
11:00-11:20 AM	Tea Break
11:20-12:00	Activity 1 (Mapping Drivers of VE)
12:00-12:15 PM	Drivers of VE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Why it happens (Discussion)</li> </ul>
12:15-01:00 PM	Activity 2 (Radicalization Tactics)
01:00-02:00 Pm	Lunch
02-00-3:00 PM	Why PVE matters for Journalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Discussion on localized context for the need of prevention</li> </ul>
3:30-3:45 PM	Tea Break
3:45-4:15 PM	Key Principles of PVE for Media professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Accuracy</li> <li>✓ Accountability</li> <li>✓ Ethics</li> </ul>
4:15-4:30 PM	Wrap up

### Day 2 Countering Violent Extremism with Journalism

Time	activities
9:30-10:00 AM	Yesterday's clicks
10:00-11:00 AM	Journalism as a Tool for CVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Counter narrative</li> <li>✓ Promotion of interfaith dialogue</li> <li>✓ Human impact</li> </ul>
11:00-11:20 AM	Tea Break
11:20-11:45	Shaping opinions, ethical considerations, policy changes, perception shifts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Discussion</li> <li>✓ Global Charter of Ethics</li> <li>✓ Safety Concerns</li> </ul>
11:45-12:20 PM	Activity 3 (Analyzing Narratives)
12:20-01:00 PM	Understanding MIL
01:00-02:00 Pm	Lunch
02-00-3:00 PM	Fake News, Information Disorder, and skill set
3:30-3:45 PM	Tea Break
3:45-4:00 PM	Activity 4 (What's wrong with this story?)

<sup>23</sup> Activity 1 to 8 are detailed in the next section

4:00-4:30 PM	Wrap Up
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### Day 3 Identifying & Countering Misinformation

Time	activities
9:30-10:00 AM	Yesterday's clicks
10:00-11:00 AM	Identifying Misinformation ✓ How Radicalization is made easy because of fake news
11:00-11:20 AM	Tea Break
11:20-12:00 pm	Activity 5 (Crafting Human Impact Stories on Extremism/Radicalization)
12:00-01:00 pm	Countering Misinformation ✓ Fact-Checking Techniques/Digital Tools for Investigative Journalism
01:00-02:00 Pm	Lunch
02-00-3:00 PM	Activity 6 (Analyzing Mis-Information)
3:30-3:45 PM	Tea Break
3:45-4:00 PM	Practical exercise of Fact-checking techniques
4:00-4:30 PM	Wrap Up

### Day 4 Gender Mainstreaming & Campaign Design

Time	activities
9:30-10:00 AM	Yesterday's clicks
10:00-11:00 AM	Gender sensitive reporting in addressing VE ✓ Discussion on a localized context
11:00-11:20 AM	Tea Break
11:20-12:00 pm	Key elements of Gender inclusive reporting ✓ Discussion on Gender stereotypes ✓ Sex vs. Gender ✓ Elements of Gender mainstreaming ✓ Women Positive stories
12:00-01:00 pm	Activity 7 (Asses new stories)
01:00-02:00 Pm	Lunch
02-00-3:00 PM	Campaign Design ✓ Discussion on Dos' and Don'ts
3:30-3:45 PM	Tea Break
3:45-4:35 PM	Activity 8 (Coverage of Men in Private Spaces) Activity 9 (Campaign)
4:35-5:00 PM	Wrap Up and Certificate Distribution



## Detailed Activities

### Activity 1: Mapping the Drivers of Violent Extremism

**Time Required:** 35 minutes

**Resources Needed:** Flip charts, markers, sticky notes

**Method:**

#### Step 1: Group Brainstorming (10 minutes)

- Divide participants into small groups (4–5 participants per group).
- Provide each group with a flip chart and markers.
- Ask each group to brainstorm and list the potential drivers of violent extremism under three categories:
  1. **Socio-Economic Inequality**
  2. **Political Marginalization**
  3. **Identity Crises**

#### Step 2: Identifying Local Examples (5 minutes)

- Each group is tasked with identifying examples of these drivers in their local context or a case study with which they are familiar.
- Encourage them to write examples on sticky notes and place them next to the relevant category on their flip chart.

#### Step 3: Presentation and Discussion (10 minutes)

- Each group presents their findings to the larger audience, explaining the identified drivers and examples.
- Facilitate a discussion to compare findings and draw connections between different groups' ideas.

#### Step 4: Collective Reflection (10 minutes)

1. As a group, discuss the following:
  - ✓ How do these drivers interact to create pathways for violent extremism?
  - ✓ Which driver appears to have the most significant impact locally, and why?
2. Write down key insights on a central flip chart.

### Activity 2: Decoding Radicalization Tactics

**Time Required:** 45 minutes

**Resources Needed:** Pre-prepared case studies or scenarios, index cards, markers

**Method:**

#### Step 1: Scenario Analysis (15 minutes)



- Provide each group with a scenario or case study illustrating recruitment tactics used by extremist groups (e.g., appeals to identity, emotional manipulation).
- Groups analyze the scenario and answer:
  1. What psychological tactics are evident in the scenario?
  2. How do these tactics appeal to the individual's vulnerabilities (e.g., cognitive biases, identity crises, governance issues, economic turmoil)?

### Step 2: Designing Counter-Messages (15 minutes)

1. Ask each group to create a counter-message to disrupt the recruitment/radicalization process depicted in the scenario.
2. Counter-messages could include alternative narratives, community programs, or digital campaigns.
3. Groups design their counter-message on an index card, including visuals or slogans if possible.

### Step 3: Sharing and Feedback (15 minutes)

1. Groups present their counter-messages to the audience.
2. Facilitate a discussion on the effectiveness of the counter-messages and potential improvements.

### Story-Driven Approach Case Study:

*The Silent Cries of Balochistan: A Story of Youth and Crossroads*

*In the heart of Balochistan, a land rich in resources but scarred by neglect, lies a small village perched on the edge of a dusty highway. The villagers watch trucks laden with coal, and minerals rumble past, bound for industries far away. Yet, their own streets are crumbling, schools are barely functional, and jobs are nowhere to be found. Among the young in this village, frustration brews quietly, their voices silenced by years of unfulfilled promises.*

*Abdul, a 19-year-old student, often sits with his friends near the tea stall, discussing the challenges they face. His dreams of higher education are weighed down by the reality that even a degree may not lead to a job. He wonders aloud why their province, so rich in resources, remains so poor. His friend Sameer points to the construction of a gleaming highway nearby. "They build this for outsiders, not for us," he says, his tone heavy with resentment.*

*The youth in Abdul's village are no strangers to recruiters—people who promise solutions to their grievances. These visitors often speak about identity, pride, and justice, stirring emotions with stories of historical wrongs and ongoing injustices. Abdul does not know what to think, but he sees how their words resonate with some of his friends, who feel abandoned and invisible.*

*In another part of the village, Shazia, a 21-year-old aspiring teacher, is busy organizing a literacy drive. She sees education as a way out of their struggles, but she worries about the growing influence of extremist narratives. She remembers her cousin, once full of ambition, who fell prey to recruiters' promises of glory and revenge. He left home last year, and the family has not heard from him since.*

*One evening, a local elder gathers the young in the village square to talk about their future. He warns them about the dangers of falling for easy answers and urges them to focus on building their community instead. Yet, his words feel hollow against the backdrop of neglect and poverty that defines their lives.*

*As the meeting ends, Abdul and Shazia exchange a glance. The choices before them are stark: continue fighting for a better future through peaceful means, or succumb to the voices that promise immediate solutions, however destructive they may be.*

What can be done to stop this spiral? The answer lies in understanding the roots of radicalization. Participants must explore:

**Economic Inequality:** How does the mismanagement of resources create resentment?

**Identity and Discrimination:** What role does the suppression of ethnic and cultural identity play?

**Governance Failures:** How do lack of opportunities and inadequate governance push youth toward dangerous alternatives?

### Activity 3: Creating and Analyzing Media Narratives

#### Objective:

Participants will explore how media narratives influence public opinion and policies through a hands-on exercise.

#### Steps:

##### 1. Introduction (10 minutes):

- ✓ Start with a short presentation explaining how media shape's public opinion, using examples like 9/11 or Mashal Khan. Emphasize how framing, tone, and choice of language impact perceptions and real-world outcomes.

##### 2. Scenario Assignment (10 minutes):

- ✓ Divide participants into small groups.
- ✓ Provide each group with a fictional scenario (e.g., "A major protest erupts in the city over economic inequality," or "A new policy sparks controversy in schools over dress codes").
- ✓ Each group is tasked with writing a **short headline** and a **3–5 sentence article** about the scenario.

##### 3. Framing Challenge (15 minutes):

- ✓ Assign each group a specific narrative perspective, such as:
  1. **Neutral and factual**
  2. **Sensational and biased**
  3. **Advocacy-driven (focused on a specific solution or group)**
- ✓ Encourage participants to think about the language, tone, and details they include to fit their assigned perspective.

#### 4. Presentation and Discussion (15 minutes):

- ✓ Each group presents their headline and article.
- ✓ After each presentation, discuss:
  1. How the narrative angle shaped the story.
  2. What kind of public opinion this framing might generate.
  3. What policy responses might result from such a narrative.

#### 5. Reflection (10 minutes):

- ✓ Facilitate a group discussion on the responsibility of media in shaping narratives.
- ✓ Ask:
  1. What did you learn about the power of framing?
  2. How can journalists ensure ethical and balanced reporting?

#### Wrap-Up:

Summarize key points, emphasizing the importance of narrative framing and the media's role in promoting fair, accurate, and inclusive reporting.

#### Activity 4: What is wrong with this story?

**Time required:** 60 minutes

**Material needed:** Two handouts, markers, meta-plan cards, meta-plan board

#### Method:

**Step 1:** The facilitator divides the participants into two groups and asks one of the participants to volunteer.

**Step 2:** The volunteered participant is given a handout One and is asked to read out the story to all the participants. Facilitator asks each group to identify what is wrong with this story.

**Step 3:** Once the groups have identified the issues with the reports, the facilitator asks each group to rewrite this report using handout Two on responsible conflict reporting. Once developed, a volunteer from each group will present their report.

**Step 4:** The facilitator gives his/her feedback

By the end of the session, participants are sensitized about words to use and words to avoid while developing a conflict story.

**Hand out 1:**

*The mohallah of gunjanabad is once again flaming red. Ruthless brawls between the ruling party of the province, shinkaar (Pasbaan) and the extremist mindset rebels of “watan ke jaanbaaz shaheen” groups headed by the notorious leader Morabdo heat up again.*

*The infamous leader Morabdo was about to storm the town along with his group of rebels last week, posing a threat to a peace deal signed earlier between Morabdo and the government. He is again not planning to hold back. He threatened he will stop with the madness and destruction only if the government ended raiding and killing civilians. He accused the peace deal signed earlier of being favourable to only the government. Currently, the situation stands catastrophic. Is there more bloodshed and massacre to follow? How badly will this end?*

**Hand out 2:**

*Do's and Don'ts of Conflict Sensitive Reporting*

*Do's*

- ✓ *Claim/ Accuse*
- ✓ *Reveal ethnic, sectarian, or religious identity but show them as victims*
- ✓ *Facts with authentic sources*      *Reporting both sides equally*
- ✓ *Call people what they call themselves*

*Don'ts*

× *Name of witness*

*Words to avoid:*

- × *'Massacre'*
- × *'Terrorist'*
- × *'Extremist'*
- × *'Fanatic'*
- × *'Devastated'*
- × *'Tragedy'*
- × *'Rumor'*
- × *'Brutality'*

**Activity 5: Crafting Human Impact Stories on Extremism/Radicalization**

**Time Required:** 35 minutes

**Resources Needed:** Index cards, markers, sample human impact stories

**Method:**

**Step 1:** Understanding the Human Cost (10 minutes)

Present participants with brief case summaries of individuals or communities impacted by violent extremism or radicalization. Examples include survivors of terrorist attacks or former extremists sharing their experiences of reintegration. (Examples of TCM and AlJazeera mentioned above)

Ask participants to discuss the emotional and social consequences highlighted in these cases.

## Step 2: Developing Story Outlines (15 minutes)

Divide participants into small groups (4–5 per group).

Have each group create an outline for a human impact story, focusing on:

*The Main Character:* Their background and experiences before, during, and after extremism.

*The Impact:* How extremism affected their lives, family, and community.

*The Path Forward:* How they are coping, advocating for peace, or contributing to societal change.

Groups should write key points on index cards.

## Step 3: Sharing and Feedback (10 minutes)

Each group presents their story outline to the larger group.

Facilitate a discussion on the effectiveness of the stories and how they could be improved to better capture the human experience and promote empathy.

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## Activity 6: Analyzing Misinformation and Building Critical Media Skills

**Objective:** To understand how misinformation spreads, identify the signs of false news, and explore steps to avoid being misled by unverified information.

### Step 1: Handout Distribution

Provide the audience with a handout containing:

1. A brief summary of the recent London attack, detailing the key events and timeline.
2. Examples of the misinformation that spread about the suspect, including false claims of their identity and background.
3. Data showing the scale of the misinformation on social media, such as the number of views and shares it received.

### Step 2: Group Discussion

**Prompt for Discussion:** Based on what you read in the handout, what were the warning signs that this information might not be accurate? What could have been done differently to avoid believing and spreading false information?

### Questions to Guide Discussion:

1. What types of posts or claims did you see that seemed suspicious or sensationalized?
2. What are some techniques you could use to verify the authenticity of a news post on social media?
3. How does the emotional tone of a post affect our perception of its credibility?

### Step 3: Practical Steps for Verification

1. Share practical strategies for fact-checking, such as:
2. Cross-referencing multiple reliable news sources (e.g., BBC, Reuters, The Guardian).
3. Using fact-checking websites like Snopes, FactCheck.org, or Full Fact.
4. Reverse image searching to confirm the origin of photos included in the post.



5. Verifying the account by checking the profile and credibility of the source sharing the post.
6. Looking for official statements from authorities and local law enforcement to confirm information.

Handout: Understanding the Spread of Disinformation in the Southport Stabbing Incident

**The tragic stabbing attack in Southport, UK, on July 30, 2024, led to the deaths of three young girls and the injury of ten others. The incident was followed by widespread public unrest, fueled by misinformation regarding the suspect's identity and background. This handout highlights how misinformation was spread and its implications on public perception and social cohesion.**

What Happened?

**The Incident: On July 30, 2024, a stabbing occurred during a children's event in Southport. The suspect, Axel Rudakubana, a 17-year-old with Rwandan heritage, was charged with three counts of murder and other related crimes. Due to UK laws protecting minors' identities before trial, initial details about the suspect were limited.**

**Public Reaction: Protests erupted, both locally and in London, where demonstrators voiced anti-migrant and Islamophobic sentiments. Slogans such as "Save our kids" and "We want our country back" became prominent, reflecting the anger and confusion surrounding the incident.**

The Spread of Disinformation

**Initial Speculation: In the absence of verified information, social media filled the gap. False claims surfaced, asserting that the suspect was named "Ali al-Shakati" and suggesting he was a Muslim migrant who arrived on a small boat in 2023.**

**Amplification: Marc Owen Jones, an academic specializing in information control, reported that by July 30, posts speculating about the suspect's religion or immigration status reached over twenty-seven million impressions. High-profile influencers, such as Andrew Tate, further fueled disinformation by claiming that an "undocumented migrant" was responsible.**

**Impact of False Narratives: These unfounded claims contributed to a spike in Islamophobia and anti-migrant sentiments, deepening social divisions and leading to real-world consequences, including attacks on mosques and violence against the Muslim community.**

Consequences of Misinformation

**The rapid spread of false information exacerbated fear and prejudice, fostering hostility towards specific communities. The incident and ensuing protests led to heightened tensions that can influence political discourse and potentially result in discriminatory policies. The Muslim community and migrants faced increased scrutiny and discrimination, further polarizing society.**

More on the attack:

**The recent UK riots, which were sparked by false information surrounding a stabbing incident, resulted in significant numerical data highlighting the spread and impact of misinformation on social media. Specifically, the false identity of the suspect was seen over 420,000 times across different platforms. The name "Ali Al-Shakati," linked to a fabricated background of being an asylum seeker, was shared in at least 4,776 posts across platforms like X (Twitter), Facebook, YouTube, Quora, and Reddit. These posts generated engagement exceeding 91,150 interactions (likes, shares, etc.), and videos mentioning the suspect were viewed more than 330,000 times.**

**The misinformation surge had a wide-reaching effect, causing a spike in posts mentioning the word "Muslim" by 242%, with over 202,000 posts referencing it between July 29 and August 8. The most intense activity occurred during the peak of the riots, with over 60,000 posts over two days. This surge contributed to significant Islamophobia and related violence, including attacks on mosques and racially motivated incidents. The social media reach during this period amassed over 11.6 million engagements, showcasing how quickly false narratives can escalate into widespread social unrest.**



## Activity 7: Assess News stories regarding Gender sensitivity

**Time required:** 90 minutes

**Resources needed:** Handouts

**Method:**

### Step 1:

The participants are handed out three case studies related to the three genders (male, female and transgender).

### Step 2:

They are given 45 minutes to read and analyze the three stories and a general discussion on the reporting style.

### Step 3:

The discussion is ended with clarification from the facilitator.

- ✓ **Hand out 1:** <https://tribune.com.pk/story/909708/from-passion-to-profession-getting-to-know-faizan-ahab>
- ✓ **Hand out 2:** <https://www.dawn.com/news/1235722>
- ✓ **Hand out 3:** <https://tribune.com.pk/story/822720/pakistans-female-commandos-on-the-front-line>

## Activity 8: Coverage of Men in Private Spaces

**Objectives:**

Challenge stereotypes perpetuated by media about men in private roles. Encourage creative thinking about how media can portray men in diverse private roles.

**Time Required:** 90 minutes

**Resources Needed:** Flip charts, Markers.

**Method**

### Step 1: Introduction

The facilitator provides a briefing on the essential components of crafting a compelling news story, focusing on structure, clarity, and impact.

### Step 2: Group Formation and Resource Distribution

Participants are divided into four groups, with each group receiving flip charts and markers to facilitate brainstorming and presentation.

### Step 3: News Story Development

Each group is assigned a specific theme that challenges societal stereotypes of men's roles. Themes include:

*Group 1: Men as homemakers and caregivers*

*Group 2: Men working in beauty parlors*

*Group 3: Male dancers*

*Group 4: Male fashion designers*

Groups collaboratively develop a news story, ensuring the narrative challenges traditional stereotypes and highlights the potential for media to foster inclusivity.

#### **Step 4: Presentation**

A volunteer from each group presents their news story to the larger audience. The presentations are evaluated on creativity, adherence to the theme, and their effectiveness in challenging stereotypes.

#### **Step 5: Feedback and Conclusion**

The facilitator provides constructive feedback to each group, emphasizing areas of strength and offering insights for improvement.

### **Activity 9: Designing a Digital Campaign for Awareness**

#### **Objective:**

This activity aims to engage journalism participants in the process of designing a digital campaign. The focus will be on creating a digital campaign for raising awareness about a specific topic (e.g., countering terror financing, promoting safe charity practices, etc.)

#### **Instructions:**

##### **Introduction (10-15 mins):**

Begin by explaining the importance of digital campaigns in modern journalism and media.

Briefly review the key components of a digital campaign (objectives, target audience, content creation, platforms, etc.)

##### **Form Groups (5 mins):**

Divide the participants into small groups (3-4 people per group).

Assign each group a topic for their digital campaign (e.g., raising awareness about counter-terror financing, promoting the importance of ethical journalism, supporting community safety, etc.)

Group Work (40-45 mins): Each group will work through the following steps to design their campaign:

##### **Group Presentations (20 mins):**

Each group will present their digital campaign design to the rest of the participants.

#### **Presentations should include:**

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- ✓ The campaign objectives
  - ✓ The target audience and rationale for choosing them
  - ✓ The key messages and the platform strategy
  - ✓ Content types and how they will be distributed
  - ✓ Encourage feedback and discussion after each presentation.
-

### Wrap-Up (10 mins):

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Summarize the key takeaways from the activity.

Emphasize the importance of each step in the campaign design process and how they all contribute to a successful campaign.

Provide tips on how to refine and optimize campaigns using data analytics in real-world scenarios.

#### **Materials Needed:**

Pen and paper or laptops/tablets for planning

Presentation tools (e.g., PowerPoint or Google Slides) for group presentations

Access to online tools for creating digital content (e.g., Canva, Adobe Spark) — optional

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## Sources

### Sources

- **Conflict-Sensitive Reporting: Training Module for Journalists**  
Produced by Individualland (IL) with the assistance of International Media Support (IMS).
- **Reporting Elections**  
Manual for Election Reporting through Data Journalism, produced by Individualland (IL).
- **Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Manual**  
Developed by Individualland (IL) in collaboration with UNESCO.
- **Gender-Sensitive Journalism**  
Training Module developed in collaboration with International Media Support (IMS).
- **Understanding Violent Extremism: The Social Psychology of Identity and Group Dynamics**  
Published by the Arab Center Washington DC.
- **Greed and Grievance in Civil War**  
By Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, published in *Oxford Economic Papers*.
- **Preventing Violent Extremism: A Review of the Literature**
  - By William Stephens, Stijn Sieckelinck, and Hans Boutellier.

## Glossary

### Glossary

**Extremism:** Beliefs or actions that support radical views, often involving the rejection of established norms or laws, and advocating for drastic societal or political change.

**Violent Extremism:** A form of extremism that justifies or encourages violence to achieve its ideological, political, or religious goals.

**Radicalization:** The process by which individuals adopt extreme political, social, or religious ideologies, often leading to an increased willingness to engage in violent acts.

**Gender Mainstreaming:** The integration of gender perspectives into all areas of policy, planning, and decision-making to promote gender equality.

**Gender Stereotyping:** The oversimplified and fixed ideas or expectations about how individuals of different genders should behave or what roles they should occupy.

**Gender Inclusivity:** Ensuring that policies, practices, and systems are inclusive of all gender identities, providing equal opportunities and rights for everyone, regardless of gender.

**Misinformation:** False or inaccurate information spread without the intent to deceive, often due to a lack of knowledge or understanding.

**Disinformation:** Deliberately falsified or manipulated information spread with the intent to deceive or mislead.

**Stigmatization:** The process of labeling or treating someone negatively based on perceived characteristics, often leading to discrimination or exclusion.

**Terrorism:** The unlawful use of violence, typically against civilians, to achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives.

**Sensationalism:** The use of shocking or exaggerated headlines or content to attract attention, often at the cost of accuracy or context.

**Nationalism:** A political ideology that emphasizes loyalty and devotion to one's nation, often prioritizing national interests over global cooperation.

**Separatism:** The advocacy or desire for a region or group to separate from a larger political entity, typically to form an independent state



## Abbreviations

<b>Abbreviations</b>
<b>BBC:</b> British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>CTA:</b> Call To Action
<b>CVE:</b> Countering Violent Extremism
<b>ISIS:</b> Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
<b>LTTE:</b> Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
<b>MIL:</b> Media and Information Literacy
<b>NACTA:</b> National Counter Terrorism Authority
<b>PVE:</b> Preventing Violent Extremism
<b>PTI:</b> Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
<b>TCM:</b> The Centrum Media
<b>UNODC:</b> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>VE:</b> Violent Extremism

## Understanding Prevention of Violent Extremism via Enhanced Media & Information Literacy



Funded by  
the European Union



**NACTA**  
National Counterterrorism Authority

**Individualland**  
Creating Impact for the Individual



United Nations  
Office on Drugs and Crime