STRENGTHENING CITIZEN ACTION: COMMUNICATION FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS.
TOOLKIT

WAY

END POVERTY

GLOBAL GO

CIVICUS

acknowledgements

Many of the materials in this toolkit have been adapted from the C-Change modules, a learning package on social and behaviour change communication, or SBCC. This toolkit has been developed in collaboration with the CIVICUS communications team.

C-Change. (2012). C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC). Washington, DC: C-Change/ FHI-360.

Additional materials have been adapted from an online course on C4D for UNICEF officers that was created and delivered by Ohio University between 2011 and 2016.

These materials are still available online at

C-Change
https://www.c-changeprogram.org/focus-areas/capacity-strengthening/sbcc-modules

UNICEF/Ohio University Course on C4D (requires registration)
www.professorcarlson.net/c4dcourse

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about CIVICUS

CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and individuals activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society for a more just, inclusive and sustainable world. We work for civil society, protecting the fundamental civic freedoms that allow us to speak out, organise and take action. We do this by defending civic freedoms and democratic values; strengthening the power of people to organise, mobilise and take action; and empowering a more accountable, effective and innovative civil society. We strive to promote marginalised voices, especially from the Global South, and have more than 4000 members in more than 175 countries.

content

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

STRENGTHENING CITIZEN ACTION: COMMUNICATION FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS *TOOLKIT.*

This toolkit has been designed to add to the skills you already use for communicating about your work, as well as advocacy and mobilising communities for civic action.

The materials in the kit will assist you to:

1. Design communication strategies based on research, evidence and a solid understanding of the context.

2. Identify tipping points for action based on analysis of audiences and their contexts.

3. Create effective communication materials that work together, including on social media.

4. Implement communication programmes and measure their progress.

5. Evaluate the contribution of your communication programme to your organisational effectivenes, and change you are trying to encourage.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide

This toolkit is for communications professionals working in civil society organisations. The materials in the toolkit are designed to assist you in promoting your work, your action, and your events.

The toolkit will provide you with some basic information on the fundamentals of creating effective communication programmes to communicate about what you do and encourage people to take action. It also provides ideas and examples of how to create useful and relevant communication materials on the web and social media, how to manage your relationships with the media, and how to stay in touch with your audience and supporters.

PAY ATTENTION
Additional materials include links to external resources that are aligned with the information presented in the guide.

A few words about why people take action

If you've had some experience in civil society and direct action campaigns, you've probably heard talk about awareness raising campaigns. In the toolkit, we encourage you to think further than awareness. Decades of research on human behaviour have taught us that people don't take action based on their awareness of an issue. It is only when they experience an emotional reaction to something – a change in a belief, an attitude, or a feeling about something – that they are motivated to take action. Therefore, when we design communication programmes and materials, we should always consider what impact they will have beyond simply spreading information about something.

Resources
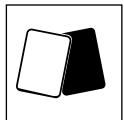
Worksheets. Worksheets are provided for you to adapt, print, and complete, either in a PDF reader or by pen and paper.
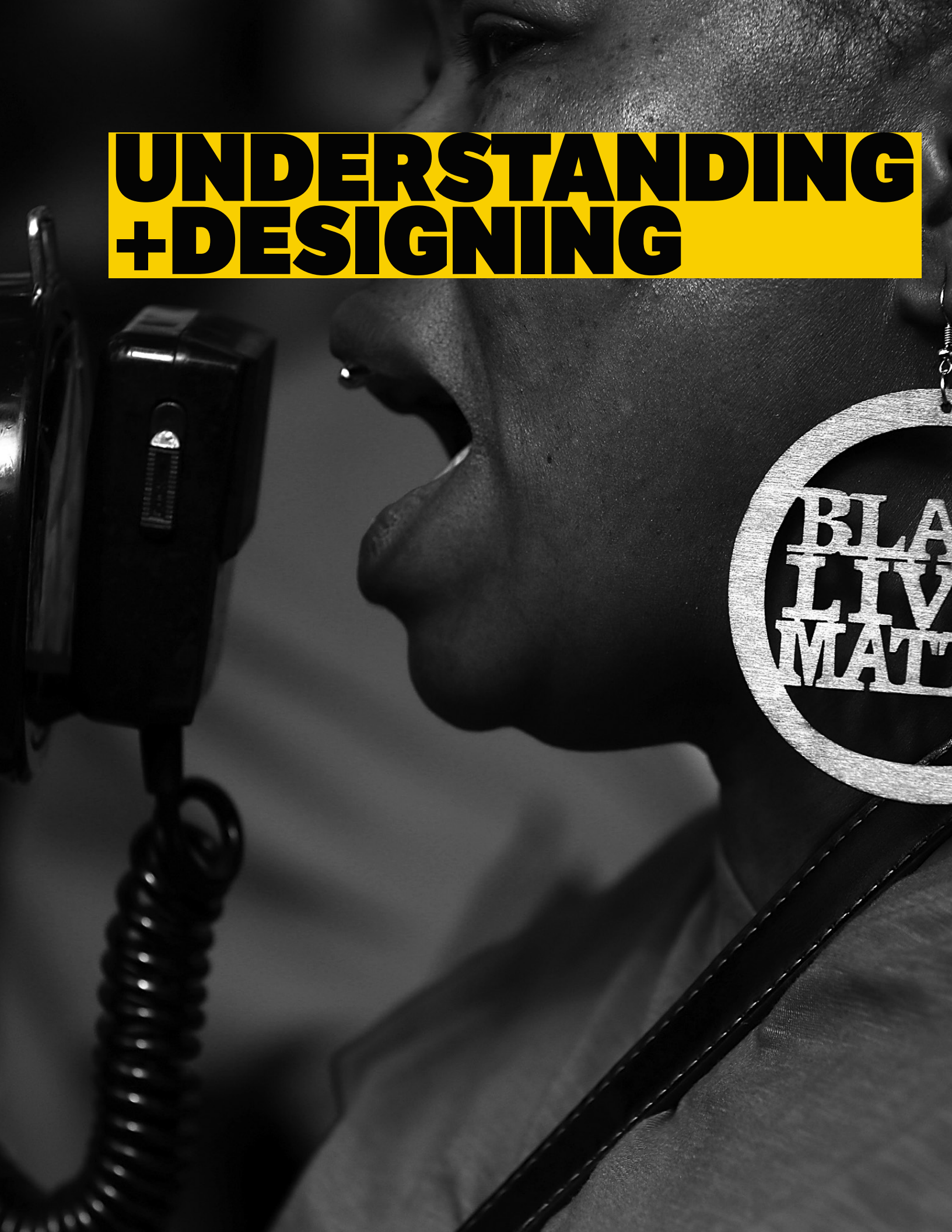
Tools . Tools are free or very low cost resources available online and elsewhere for you and your organisation to use to create and enhance content.

Theory and Models. The application of a few key theoretical concepts is integrated into these modules. Examples of theoretical applications are in the Theory Corners.

UNDERSTANDING +DESIGNING

Understanding the situation

Before we start creating content for our communication programme, we need to understand the situation that surrounds the issue we're working on. Our communication will be more effective if we know:

- **People's current level of knowledge related to the issue or action we want them to take. Who do we want to communicate with about what? What do we want to achieve? New knowledge, changed attitude, new behaviour, take action?**
- **People's beliefs about the issue or action**
- **People's attitudes toward an action**
- **Barriers that prevent people from taking action**
- **Things that motivate people to take action**

Some times, you can find the answers to these questions by conducting research on the internet, in academic journals, and government reports. However, the best research is usually done by talking to people, such as through focus group discussions, interviews with key informants, and surveys. Conducting research can be expensive, so when possible, it is always a good idea to start by building on research that has already been done. However, its important to make sure that the information and strategies make sense for your context.
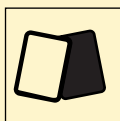
refer to worksheet #1:
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS/UNDERSTANDING
ON THE NEXT PAGE | You can download a fillable version of the worksheet at
http://civicus.org/documents/Worksheet1_SummaryofAnalysis.docx

Once we have a solid understanding of the situation, we can move on to design a communication strategy.

WHAT IS A COMMUNICATION PROJECT?

We think about communication in two broad categories. First there is the ongoing communication you are doing with your stakeholders, like funders, board members, and others interested in your work. This type of communication may not have any particular start and end date, but it still has a purpose, such as maintaining relationships, building coalitions, securing funding, or finding new partners. The second type of communication is sometimes called a campaign: it has a specific start and end date, and a very carefully defined set of objectives. Both categories of communication are done for a reason that you and your organisation have agreed upon and that lead to measurable actions, such as increased funding, new members, or more engaged board members.

In this guide, the word project can refer to either type of communication.

UNDERSTANDING + DESIGNING
WORKSHEETS

EXAMPLE WORKSHEET 1: SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS
This worksheet has been partially completed for you as an example.

WHAT'S THE CHALLENGE OR PROBLEM ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT?	Lack of engagement of voters, particularly among youth 20 - 24 years of age.
WHAT PROCESSES HAVE YOU FOLLOWED?	Research among young people indicate that they often don't know where to vote; also, they don't see themselves as being able to compete or take part in political office, even at local levels.
WHAT STRATEGIES HAVE YOU USED?	Our organisation has worked on mobilizing youth through training programmes on civil action. We also maintain a website with information about where to vote, how to register for an office, and with general tips on becominginvolved in political action.
WHAT THEORIES OR MODELS, IF ANY, HAVE GUIDED THIS WORK?	We used the socio - ecological model to analyse the situation around youth and young people. We find that there is a lack of enabling factors in the environment, particularly the high cost of launching a political campaign.

Designing a communication strategy

If you've done research and have a thorough understanding of the issue you're planning to address with communication, you should also have an idea about a goal, or the impact you're hoping to have. Setting goals is usually a collaborative process, where stakeholders decide together on what the end result of a communication programme should be. Think big when setting goals: they are aspirational and will help guide your communication work. For example, one of the goals of CIVICUS is to strengthen the power of people to organise, mobilise, and take action.

Once you have agreed on a goal or a set of goals, you can think about using the goal or goals to inform a **Theory of Change.**

A theory of change creates a link between communication activities and the large-scale goals. The approach helps communities and planners to work together to outline a process in which goals are considered a starting point. Working backward from the goals or impacts, planners and participants identify medium- and short-term outcomes that would contribute to the achievement of the goals, and from there, propose specific action strategies, or communication activities that can lead to the desired goals (Connell & Klem, 2000).
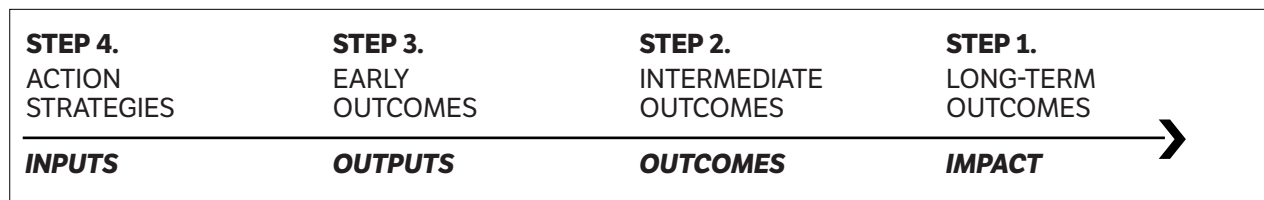
STEPS FOR CREATING A THEORY OF CHANGE

Impact refers to a broad, aspirational goal for the project or strategy. The impact of a civil society focused communication strategy might be something such as: "increased citizen participation in political events and greater accountability among elected officials."

Outcomes refers to changes in people's behaviours or actions that are expected to contribute to or lead to the desired impact.

These behaviours or actions should be as specific as you can make them. For example, "voting in all elections" would contribute to the impact described above.

Outputs refers to people's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings regarding the issue. Changes in these factors are theorized to lead to the actions or behaviours presented in the outcomes portion of the theory.

Inputs refers to communication activities such as workshops, dialogues, interpersonal communication, media campaigns (including social media) and other communication – related activities. These activities should contain key messages and communication content that will influence people's knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about the issue, and thus contribute to changes in their behaviours, and thereby contribute to the overall impact of the project.

STEP 4. ACTION STRATEGIES	**STEP 3.** EARLY OUTCOMES	**STEP 2.** INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	**STEP 1.** LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
INPUTS	*OUTPUTS*	*OUTCOMES*	*IMPACT*

UNDERSTANDING+DESIGNING

WHAT IS COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE?

Communication for Social Change (CSC) is the process of using communication to achieve changes in society. Sometimes these changes occur among individuals, and other times they occur in communities and society at large. CSC is sometimes called **Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) or Communication for Development (C4D).** Generally, SBCC and C4D refer to the systematic application of interactive, theory-based, and research-driven communication processes and strategies to address *tipping points* for change at the individual, community, and social levels. Civil society organisations can use communication for social change to achieve their goals by conducting advocacy with policy makers, encouraging direct action, and by influencing their constituencies through dialogue, mass media, and online interactions.

An example of theory of change for civil action is shown below.

EXAMPLE.
THEORY OF CHANGE FOR CIVIL ACTION.

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Door – to – door canvassing near election time to inform people of the date of elections of where to vote	Members of the public know when elections are scheduled	People vote in all elections	Greater citizen participation in civic action
Capacity building in communities on the process for running for office	Members of the public know where their polling places are located	People attend public forums	Increased accountability to citizens among elected officials
Social media posts (Facebook) promoting the benefits of participating in caucuses or other public forums	Members of the public believe they can be elected to public office	People run for elected office	
	Members of the public believe that their voice matters in public forums		

Maybe you're wondering how we know that the communication activities we do will lead to changes in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and therefore influence people to take action. We know through communication and psychological theory – and we will include a few of the of the most commonly used theories in CSC throughout this toolkit.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR AUDIENCE

When you begin designing your communication strategy, you should think carefully about the audiences you're trying to reach. For civil society organisations, some potential audiences could include:

> · People in a specific demographic you are trying to influence to take action
> · Donors and funders
> · Members of your organisation's board or governing body
> · Lawmakers and other representatives of your government
> · Other organisations working in your field or area
> · Members of the media
> · Other important audiences you have identified as key to your organisation's success

Different organisations have different key audiences, so you'll need to determine this for your own context. Examples might be youth, parents, women, children, or any other specific group of people with whom you communicate regularly to achieve your goals. Remember that "the public" is not a useful audience group because it's too broad; you should avoid creating communication for the public.

The way your organisation communicates with each of these audience groups will be different. With people you hope will take action, you'll need to provide calls to action and key messages that will lead to change. For donors and funders, you may need to provide updates on your progress and proposals for grants. Members of your organisation's board need regular updates on your work, while lawmakers and other government representatives need specific advocacy to encourage them to make changes in laws and policies. Members of the media also require specific communication. We have included many ideas about how to communicate with members of these groups in this toolkit, but you'll also need to do your own research to discover which messages and ideas are most likely to lead to the outcomes you're seeking.

Choosing a strategic approach

Civil society organisations use communication for many purposes. An organisation may conduct **advocacy** to encourage legislative or policy changes. The same organisation may use **social mobilisation** to identify capacity in grassroots organisations and mobilise them to collective action. Finally, the organisation may use behaviour change communication as part of a coordinated effort to encourage individual citizens to participate in democratic action such as caucusing, voting, or running for political office. Hopefully, these approaches are applied in the context of well researched and carefully designed campaigns.

Once you have identified the audiences you want to reach, you can choose the strategic approach that fits that audience.

UNDERSTANDING+DESIGNING
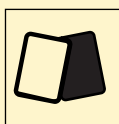
Communication channels

Channels are the ways or methods people use to communicate. For example, radio, television and newspapers are all channels. YouTube and Facebook are also channels. Interpersonal communication, street theatre, and dialogue are also channels. You should use the understanding you gained during the first part of the process to identify the channels that are used by your audiences. There's no value in using a channel that won't reach any of your audience members!

Choosing tactics

Tactics are the communication activities that you undertake to get your message out. These are scheduled, measurable efforts to get your story placed in newspapers or on radio, to schedule a presentation by your Executive Director, to post your video to YouTube, or to post a case study on your website illustrating a program outcome. How you plan your tactics can depend on the strategic approach you've chosen for each audience, and on the ways each audience uses the communication channels you've identified.

Putting it all together

Once you've understood the situation, developed your theory of change, identified audiences, and chosen the appropriate strategic approach, communication channels and tactics, it's time to plan the rollout of your communication activities. Worksheet 2 is provided to assist you in thinking about and planning for a communication initiative that contains multiple activities for different audiences.

refer to worksheet #2:
DETAILED WORKPLAN FOR COMMUNICATION
ON THE NEXT PAGE | You can download a fillable version of the worksheet at *http://civicus.org/ documents/Worksheet2_Workplan.docx*

THEORY CORNER
ECOLOGICAL MODEL OF CHANGE

Ecological models of change gained influence when practitioners realized the limitations of existing models that focused exclusively on the individual and the assumption that individuals are in full control of their behaviours and living conditions. As noted by Glass and McAtlen (2006) "the study of health behaviour in isolation from the broader social and environmental context is incomplete and has contributed to disappointing results from experiments in behaviour change."

An ecological perspective considers the following:

Multiple levels of factors influence social and behaviour change.

Levels of factors can include individual, interpersonal, community/organizational and national/political/environmental.

Influences interact across levels.

Multi-level interventions addressing various influences are more robust and potentially sustainable than individual-level interventions.

UNDERSTANDING + DESIGNING
WORKSHEETS

EXAMPLE WORKSHEET 2: DETAILED WORKPLAN FOR COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES
This detailed Workplan is intended to help plan your communication activities. Include each of the activities and tactics you decided on for each of the audiences you identified. Think about the WHO will conduct the activity and the resources it will take to complete the activity. Then note the quarter in which you plan to implement the activity. You can note a specific date, or just add a mark to indicate that the activity will be taking place in a particular quarter. This worksheet has been partially completed for you as an example.

	Implementers: Lead Staff, Consultants, Volunteers and/ or Partners	Resources/ Budget	YEAR			
			1st Quarter	**2nd Quarter**	**3rd Quarter**	**4th Quarter**
Audience Group 1: Youth age 18 - 24						
Activity or Material: Engagement training	Workshop team	$50,000	✓		✓	
Activity or Material: Facebook campaign on civic action	Sipho	$5,000	✓	✓	✓	✓
Activity or Material: Twitter campaign around voting	Phetheni	$5,000	✓	✓	✓	✓
Audience Group 2:						
Activity or Material:						
Activity or Material:						
Activity or Material:						
Audience Group 3:						
Activity or Material:						
Activity or Material:						
Activity or Material:						

UNDERSTANDING+DESIGNING

ETHICS

ETHICS OF COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Communication can be powerful tool for change, but it also has the potential to disempower people, to expose them in ways that may be harmful, and to perpetuate existing inequalities or injustices. Additionally, people have a right to privacy that always takes precedence over the goals of your communication programme. Your communication should create opportunities for participation, action, and empowerment. Consider the following points when you start working on a communication programme:

How could people most affected by this issue take part in the development of the communication strategy?

What are the unspoken messages included in the communication materials we have created, and what do they say about people affected by the issue we're working on?

Have we ensured that people's identities are not being shared without their explicit permission?

Have we provided platforms for people who may not be able to use social media or other online platforms to communicate with us about the issue?

Have we included photos, videos or other content that marginalizes, re-victimizes, or stigmatizes people involved in or affected by the issue we're working on?

We need to be sure that the content we create will not put people at risk. If you use people's names, faces, or voices in your communication materials, you need to be sure that this will not endanger their safety. If you have any doubts about this, you should use a pseudonym, blur their face, or alter their voice. For more information on protecting people in your materials, visit: https://library.witness.org/product/concealing-identity/.

The time people spend with you, contributing to research or the development of communication plans should be rewarded by your commitment to creating effective communication. Be sure that your communication programme benefits all people affected by the issue and that it increases people's ability to participate in civic action.

UNDERSTANDING+DESIGNING

GENDER

A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Consider the full definition of what we mean by "a gender perspective: Gender has been referred to as "the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women" (WHO 2010). Often, gender and sex are understood to be one and the same. In reality, they are quite different. Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define what men's and women's bodies are physically able to do, while gender refers to what society expects us to do. The result of traditional gender norms and roles is that people are often unable to reach their full potential. Both men and women would benefit from a perspective that does not limit what individuals should or should not do (CARE 2007). Respond to the following questions while holding onto that perspective.

Consider the people most affected by the issue you're working on.

In what ways might gender make them more likely to be affected?

In what ways might gender play into their view of the issue?

How does gender affect their ability to act and address the issue?

Consider the people who have contact with the self and directly influence them.

What is the effect of gender on the sexual partners, family members, co-workers, and friends?

How does gender affect their relationships?

How might gender make them more or less likely to support change?

Consider the people who indirectly influence the self. This could include journalists or policy-makers, religious leaders, or health centre directors.

How does gender affect the role or influence of these policy-makers, leaders, or journalists?

How does gender affect how they see the situation or how involved they might become with it?

You should think about the **role of culture** in the issue you're working on. Respond to the questions and substitute the word culture for gender.

Make sure that the content (text, images, videos…) is balanced across gender lines and is ensuring the diversity of voices.

UNDERSTANDING+DESIGNING

Checklist for strategy design

☐ Have you completed **research** so that you have a thorough understanding of people's knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about your issue?

☐ Are you **collecting information** related to your issue in a systematic way?

☐ Do you have a **storage place to collect facts**, statistics and other data relevant to your mission/communication issue?

☐ Have you **developed a theory of change** with stakeholders to help guide your design?

☐ Have you **chosen a strategic approach** (advocacy, social mobilisation, behaviour change communication)?

☐ Have you identified the most important **communication channels** for your audience(s)?

☐ Have you decided on the **tactics** that you think will be most effective in reaching your audience(s)?

☐ Have you **developed a timeline** for the rollout of your communication activities?

BUILDING YOUR WEB PRESENCE

WEB PRESENCE

Why go online?

As civil society organisations, our problems are on the ground; we deal with issues that affect people's day-to-day lives in a very substantive way. If our work is focused on making a difference in the physical world, *why should we build an online presence?*

There are both benefits and costs to being online. Some of the benefits are:

- **Being able to build relationships with people who can't or won't have the chance to meet us face to face**
- **Reach a wider audience, including international audiences, than we can't face to face**
- **Being able to tell our story the way we want to, outside the filter of the media**
- **Being able to coordinate action and initiatives efficiently and effectively**

Although these benefits are significant, before you take your organisation online, you should think about some of the potential costs.

These include:

- **The financial costs associated with creating and maintaining an online presence**
- **The time it will take members of your organisation to create useful and interesting content, consistently**
- **The possibility that your organisation will lose control of messages (but this isn't always a bad thing!)**
- **The unforeseen changes in your organisation that will inevitably occur when you go online, such as changes in your relationships with current partners and clients**

How to get online?

There are many options when it comes to establishing an online presence. The use of any one or all of these platforms will depend on what you're hoping to achieve. One option is to create **social media pages, channels, or accounts**. These might include: **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram** and **YouTube.**

Many organisations find these platforms useful and effective in communicating with their stakeholders and don't need to create their own website. However, an organisation that is looking to create and reinforce its brand will usually create its own website. There are numerous ways that you can do this free or at relatively low cost; some of our favourites include: **Wordpress** (free option), **Wix** (free option, with ads), **Squarespace** (about $150 per year for a personal site).

These companies provide you with templates that you may customize to change how your site looks and feels.

Depending on your skill with coding and design, you can create an excellent site.

Updating content can generally be done by someone without web coding skills. For those with the skills to design a website from scratch, there are many options for web hosting, which refers to a service that provides space on a web server for you to create and upload your own code. If you plan to go this route, you'll need someone with web coding skills connected to your organization who can regularly update your content.

Because of all the available options for an online presence, what seems like it might be an easy decision to go online may be more complicated than a simple yes or no. As in our communication design process, we need to understand the situation before we make a decision about what route to choose.

WEB PRESENCE

Why build a website when social media will do?

We want our communications to have an impact, and even if we reach a huge online audience, we have to reach the right people – people who are stakeholders in our work and who are willing and able to contribute to the cause. We also want to build and maintain meaningful relationships with them once they find us online.

A well-designed website that focuses on content is the online place that brings together all of your various stakeholders, social media platforms, and other media. It's the place that tells your story the way you want it told and that unites everything under one roof. Creating your own website has some other benefits:

> » **It makes your brand memorable** and reinforces the relationships you develop on other platforms.

> » **It gets people's attention** in ways that other platforms like Facebook and Twitter can't. On Facebook and other social media platforms, the visibility of content is controlled by algorithms and you are not guaranteed that visitors will see your posts.

> » **It allows you to control more closely the interaction** between your organisation and the stakeholders using your site. For example, a contact request can include a space for a user to provide an email address and other contact information, thus growing your email list.

Although it may seem like creating a website is mostly about the technology, it's really more a combination of art and science. If you're going to build a website, it should showcase your organisation's unique perspective on the issues you're involved in. It should reflect your organisation's culture and personality, and invite the visitor to get to know you – to build a relationship with you.

What will it cost?

For non– profit, civil society organisations, the cost of building a website can be a significant barrier to even getting started. However, there are ways to get started that are very low cost.

One option is to create a blog with your own domain name using **WordPress.** To get started, go to ***www.wordpress.com,*** create an account, and start a blog! That's all you need to do to get started, but to bring everything together and effectively brand your organisation, you'll need to start writing for your blog, experimenting with templates, and uploading your organisation's logo and other materials.

PRACTICAL TIP

You can create social media pages, channels or accounts. These might include: **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram,** or **YouTube.**

PRACTICAL TIP

Some of our favourite website builders include: **Wordpress** (free option), **Wix** (free option, with ads), **Squarespace** (about $150 per year for a personal site).

PRACTICAL TIP

Examples of **free websites** established using these tools:

WORDPRESS
The Obama Foundation
www.obama.org

Ogilvy & Mather South Africa
http://www.ogilvy.co.za/

WIX
TGIM
https://www.thankgoditsmonday.co/
Tougura
https://www.tougura.com/

PRACTICAL TIP

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a process of including key words and metadata in your website so that search engines like Google and Bing can categorize your site correctly and present it to people searching for organizations like yours. If you need to, engage someone with experience in SEO to help you optimize your site.

Wix is another option for creating a low–cost website of your own. Go to **www.wix.com** to explore their templates and designs. If you want to host your own site but don't want to do design from scratch, you might consider using Joomla!, which is an open source Content Management System (CMS). You can get more information about Joomla! here: **www.joomla.org.**

NO MATTER WHAT YOU CHOOSE, HERE ARE WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO GET STARTED (at a minimum)

Domain. Your own domain name.

Branding. A logo and other branding materials, such as a style guide.

Content about who you are. Some quality content —your story, your vision, your mission.

Information about your activities. Something that connects your website to your grassroots action, such as links to events on Facebook, media coverage on other sites, or a video of your latest work.

Checklist for web design

☐ Have you created **engaging content** for your website?

☐ If you need to, have you engaged someone who knows **how to build an effective website**?

☐ Have you integrated your other **online platforms**, like Facebook and YouTube, into your website?

☐ Are you **updating your website** on a regular basis?

☐ Have you considered **accessibility in your website** design so that people with disabilities can fully access your content?

☐ Have you considered **Search Engine Optimization** so that your website appears in searches related to your mission?

PRACTICAL TIP: ANALYTICS

Website analytics refers to code that can help you determine what visitors are doing when they visit your site. We recommend you engage the services of someone who is familiar with analytics to help you insert this into your website.

PRACTICAL TIP: WEB DESIGN

Once you start building your website, make sure you keep in mind the following:

1. **It's always a good idea to test your web updates**. Make sure people who use the site can reach the content you've so carefully created. Consider conducting a focus group or two to get a sense of what people think about your site.

2. **Your website should be accessible** to people with disabilities. For those who are sight – impaired, screen readers are used to read content. For those who are deaf or hard of hearing, closed captions and subtitles on video or transcripts of audio will assist.

3. **A website should be alive.** Remember to update your content regularly so that your visitors stay interested in your work.

CREATING CONTENT FOR THE MEDIA

Content creation

Creating content for the media is an important component of your work as a civil society organisation. The media should be an important partner in your work, by bringing attention to your cause and providing important information to the public. That said, the ways that organisations interact with journalists has changed in the years since the days of press releases on the wire for journalists. Because they're often written for stakeholders as well as journalists, press releases are nowadays often called news releases.

Today, the most effective relationships with journalists are created on social media. Press releases are now called news releases and are no longer exclusively for journalists. Your website can function as the front door to your own newsroom, where your stakeholders, allies, and partners can find the latest information about the work you're doing. It is no longer necessary to use the media to spread information about the exciting things you're involved in; a fully develop media relations strategy includes news releases for your stakeholders as well as the media.

Writing news releases

A news release is a short description of an activity, event, or achievement that your organisation is involved in. They are usually a single page in length and are often structured like a news story: a descriptive headline, most of the important details in the first paragraph, and contact information at the end. **A sample news release is located here:** http://civicus.org/documents/SampleNewsRelease_Liberia.pdf **and a news release template is here:** http://civicus.org/documents/NewsReleaseTemplate.docx

It's useful to create news releases for your online newsroom consistently. Don't wait for a big event to write news releases; get in the habit of creating them frequently, at least once a week and posting them online. Send the most important news releases to journalists and use your online newsroom as a space to talk about your organization. Make sure your news releases include links to specific pages on your website, and be sure to include news releases in your posts on social media like Facebook and Twitter.

Creating an online newsroom

The great thing about an online newsroom is that it's not just for journalists. Creating news releases regularly and posting them to your online newsroom will improve your website's ranking in search results, and can reach all visitors to your website, not just journalists.

THEORY CORNER
FRAMING

Framing refers to the idea that news is presented in ways that promote particular definitions and interpretations of political issues.* One of our tasks in media relations and in CSC work may include educating reporters about new frames that promote different attitudes toward the issue we're working on. We can do this through direct interactions with journalists on social media, through capacity building events like workshops and seminars, or through interviews and op-eds.

Shah DV, Watts MD, Domke D, Fan DP. 2002. News framing and cueing of issue regimes: Explaining Clinton's public approval in spite of scandal. Public Opin. Q. 66:339–70

HIGHLIGHT

A sample news release is located here: http://civicus.org/documents/SampleNewsRelease_Liberia.pdf **A news release template is located here:** http://civicus.org/documents/NewsReleaseTemplate.docx

CONTENT
FOR THE MEDIA

Your online newsroom needs some background information about your organisation. This media or press kit should contain basic facts about your organisation, images, profiles of spokespeople for the organisation and other team members who communicate with the media, your mission and vision, fact sheets about your organization and anything else you think a journalist would use when writing a story about your organisation. Your newsroom should also include links to all of your social networking sites: be sure to clearly display links to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and any other social media you use. Ideally, you should also include video and images in your online newsroom. At a minimum, link to an Instagram or YouTube account so visitors (including journalists) have more than written content.

Building relationships with journalists and pitching stories

Journalists receive far more ideas and pitches for stories than they can possibly write about. Your organisation has an important message and is doing meaningful work; how do you reach journalists who will cover your events, activities, and achievements? Keep your pitch succinct and avoid jargon.

The first rule of interacting with journalists is the most important: don't send spam email to them to try to convince them to write about you. Instead, create relationships with journalists by reading their stories on their websites, commenting on their work, and interacting with them on Twitter and Facebook.

Once you have established a relationship with a journalist, write a carefully crafted pitch for a story. Target one journalist at a time; don't send the same pitch to multiple journalists. Make sure your pitch includes a mention of something the reporter has written about that connects their reporting to your organisation. If you find a journalist who is covering your partners or other organisations similar to yours, be sure to note it in your pitch. If you can, include in your pitch some details about the ways your stakeholders work with or benefit from your organisation's work. Be aware that most journalists will not open attachments in email messages, so make sure your email includes the whole pitch in the body. Be sure to follow up right away with contact details or

PRACTICAL TIP: POINTS TO ATTRACT MEDIA COVERAGE

1. Connect your work, issue, or cause to current news stories.

2. Target specific reporters to increase the chances of having your story covered

3. Don't send spam email to journalists; build relationships with journalists and send personal emails

4. Be available

5. Grab their attention. Make your subject line and first sentence intriguing, exciting, and engaging

6. Frame your pitch so that it is related to previous reporting by the journalist. Make connections to journalists on social media and get to know their interests before you send them pitches.

PRACTICAL TIP: GOOGLE ALERTS

You can monitor online mentions about issues your organisation is working on using **Google alerts.** Go to https://www.google.com/alerts and **create an alert.** Google will notify you via email when the issue is mentioned on the web.

CONTENT
FOR THE MEDIA

Op-eds

Occasionally, leaders of civil society organisations and activists will be invited to write an op-ed (opinion/editorial) for a newspaper. Your organisation can also submit op-eds on your own, and they can be a useful way to share your stance on issues with the public.

TEN TIPS FOR CREATING GOOD OP-EDS

Always tie your op-ed into a news hook. If you can see one coming, plan ahead. if a story is breaking, act fast (24 hours). There has to be a reason why an editor should run it as it relates to the news cycle.

Make it personal. Tell a story, invoke an experience. Make it readable and relevant.

Make it local. With the exception of a small number of international outlets. There should be a national or local tie in. How do the policies/events impact a particular community? What is the community history on the issue?

Choosing the right author. A relevant local activist/face of the movement. The prestige and credibility of the author can make all the difference.

Choose the right messenger. On any given topic, some messengers have more persuasive credibility with the target audience/readership than others. Who does the readership listen to? Who do they respect? And who do they not listen to?

Argue a strong point powerfully. An oped argues a point of view, it does not weigh all sides of an issue. As a rough rule of thumb, make one strong point and back it up with 3-4 supporting arguments.

Avoid jargon. Use accessible language. Wherever possible use metaphors, analogies and stories to make your argument more accessible, common sense, plainly stated perspective.

Always respect the word limit. Editors don't have the time to cut your piece down to size and if it is too long it will very likely be rejected immediately. Typically, 750 words will do, but always check the paper's op-ed page to find our their preference. In general your odds will be better if your piece is even shorter.

Start strong and end strong. Open with a strong, tight, clear paragraph. If the reader only reads two paragraphs they should get your essential point. The middle paragraphs exist to reinforce your point. The final paragraph should close the deal and then leave the reader feeling like it's only sensible to agree with you.

Name names. Policies don't just happen - people make decisions. In political communications, the aim is to declare who is responsible and to make it clear why they should do the right thing. This needs not to be adversarial, but it cannot be vague or unstated.

PRACTICAL TIP
In addition to new releases and op-eds, consider participating in call – in talk shows on the radio. Make it a habit to listen to talk shows regularly, and if a topic comes up that is related to the work your organisation is doing, call in and share your experience. The journalist will often mention your organisation by name and give you an opportunity to talk about your work.

CONTENT
FOR THE MEDIA

The media interview

The most important part of doing an excellent interview with the media is preparation. Of course, the person in your organisation who will do an interview with a journalist must know the history and background of the organisation. They must be able to respond to basic questions about the mission, work, and purpose of the organisation without hesitation.

Beyond these details, however, the interviewee needs to be able to talk about the organisation's current work and the relationship between the work and what's happening in the country, city, town, or community. The connection between current events and your organisation's work can increase your profile and make your work immediately relatable to the audience.

If you have to address bad news about your organisation, the best approach is always to be honest and transparent about your organisation's role in the event. If necessary, you should apologize sincerely and state what your organisation is doing to correct the situation. If you know these kinds of questions might be asked, it's best to send a leader in the organisation - an executive or director – to do the interview. Hopefully, you'll never have to do this sort of interview, but if you do, prepare yourself in the office before hand by practicing your responses to difficult questions.

Remember, the interview is an opportunity for you to tell your organisation's story in your own words!"Interviews may be stressful, but they can also be fun. Keep in mind that the reporter is also seeking a positive experience. They may challenge you, but it's usually in the interest of learning more about your organisation.

Checklist for creating content for the media

☐ Have you prepared a **Frequently Asked Questions** (FAQ) document for your organisation and its programs?

☐ Do you have a template for **news releases**?

☐ Are you **developing relationships** with editors and reporters of influencing publications?

☐ Are you following **key journalists** on social media?

☐ Do you have a **database of categorized contacts**?

☐ Have you created an **online news room** for your media communications
(fact sheets, press releases, contacts)?

☐ Have you **personalized your pitches** to match them to the interests of the journalists?

SOCIAL MEDIA

👍
SOCIAL MEDIA

Why we need social media

Social media has become crucial for organisations to share their work, for storytelling, for market research, brand awareness, relationship building, and customer service among others.

We use social media because it helps us to connect with people and organisations, and to share information and ideas about the work we do. Currently, especially with the rise of mobile internet, social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have transformed the way we consume news and communicate and share information. If you are not using these tools as part of your marketing strategic communication plan, you should start thinking about which tools are right for your purposes.

Like all successful communication, using social media needs a plan. A social media strategy lays the groundwork for social media success. Before you start posting on Facebook or Twitter, you should know how you are going to measure success, research what your constituents are already using, and have content prepared. Improvising your social media communication will likely lead to time wasted on tactics that are not effective.

Essentials of a social media strategy

In order to plan your social media strategy, consider the following:

#1. WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

Identify your goals. Look closely at your organisation's overall needs and decide how you want to use social media to contribute to reaching them. Remember that you need to decide the primary objectives of your strategy, make them clear to everyone on your team and focus all your decisions and efforts on achieving them.

Goals to consider might include:
Building brand awareness
Attracting new supporters or funders
Engaging/supporting existing supporters more effectively
Increasing loyalty

#2. WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO ATTRACT?

Once you have a clear picture about what your goals are, you can start thinking about your audience, the people you want to attract with your content.

For instance, **if you are trying to build your brand and attract new people to your site,** you will need to focus on defining who those people are, where you will find them and which messages will call their attention. One thing that might help is contacting bloggers relevant to your field, your partners, and influencers who will be willing to direct their followers to your site. An influencer is a person who has established credibility in a specific industry on social media. They normally have access to a large audience and can persuade others.

SOCIAL MEDIA

On the other hand, **if you want to build credibility or raise awareness about an issue** among existing partners, consumers or funders, you might want to make them engage with you via social media. You have to be responsive to comments and questions, actively post in your social media, and provide content they might want to be interested in. Pay attention to the channels you already have in place, such as email, and link your social media accounts to your e-newsletters. Be sure to add follow buttons or links to your social media feeds on your website.

As an exercise you can develop a "buyer persona". A buyer persona is a fictional person that can help you target the people you want to reach. When you know your target audience's age, occupation, income, interests, pains, problems, obstacles, habits, likes, dislikes, motivations and objections, then it's easier to target them on social or any other media.

#3. WHICH SOCIAL PLATFORMS ARE THE MOST RELEVANT?

Once you have identified a target audience, you can start thinking about the platforms that will help you better achieve your goals. Not all social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, etc.) will serve your particular goals and target audience equally well. Think of the behaviours, preferences, and demographics of your target audience, and research your constituents. Pay special attention to the content they produce, the information they are posting, how they are posting, and how they respond to their followers. For example, if you find that your potential funders are using a specific network, that's where you need to be.

#4. WHAT STYLE/TONE/VOICE SHOULD YOU USE?

In social media, consistency is important. It is important to develop and maintain a particular brand persona that people will relate to and want to engage with. You will have to think ahead about the tone you want to adopt (informative and serious, or more informal and funny), and the writing style you'll use (the vocabulary and sentence structure you use). Having an effective and consistent voice is a valuable method for attracting and retaining social media followers. While the tone and style you use in social media should not be completely different than the one you use for your website, advertising, and other materials, social media can be more casual.

#5. WHO WILL MEASURE YOUR SUCCESS?

Tracking your progress and being able to adapt your strategy is fundamental. Social media analytics are crucial in our online communications strategy. As the *Innovation for Change Helper Hub* (https://www.counterpart.org/projects/innovation-for-change/) explains, their correct use can help inform any organisation's marketing, communications, or campaigning strategies. You can use social media analytics to inform the kinds of things you post on social media platforms by taking an in depth look at what your audiences respond to, how they respond, when they respond, and why.

PRACTICAL TIP: BUYER PERSONA FREE TEMPLATES
- **Buyer persona creator #1:** http://www.sprocketrocket.co/tools/buyer-persona-examples
- **Buyer persona creator#2:** https://xtensio.com/user-persona/

PRACTICAL TIP
Take into account that **building a strategy takes time.** What works one month can change the next. Being flexible and experimenting with different tactics is important.

PRACTICAL TIP: SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IDEAS
- Create a plan for each social media channel
- Post consistently
- Use social media management tools
- Post photos: photos have shown to be the most popular type of social media content for engagement
- Measure and analyze
- Build a community
- Interact
- Build partnerships

Decide which metrics matter the most and how will you measure them. Social media platforms provide metrics that can help you understand and track your performance on that platform. You will also need to weave metrics from your website (i.e. using Google Analytics) to check how your social media actions are impacting the traffic in your website. Before you go online you have to learn what's available, and which metrics will help you determine if you're reaching your goals.

According to the *Innovation for Change Helper Hub* we can find different tools that range from low cost and easy-to-use to more complex, requiring a larger budget and more social media experience. This array of tools performs a variety of functions that generally includes:

Social media scheduling: the ability to post in advance across a number of different social media platforms

Social media monitoring: the option to view how much exposure you're getting across your different platforms

Social media analytics: the capability to analyse who your audience is, what motivates them, what's working and not working, and much more.

Below you will find some of these tools, and resources that you can use to schedule, monitor and analyse your performance on social media.

#5. WHO WILL BE IN CHARGE OF IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY?

Once you have a basic strategy it is time for execution. You have to establish who is going to manage the social media strategy on a daily basis. Take into account that different skill sets are necessary such as content creation, illustration, design, community management, analytics/measurement. Even if there is a community manager in charge of implementing the social media strategy, she/he will still have to ask others within the organisation for information, and for collaboration. Clear division of responsibilities and clear structure is key. Consider using team collaboration tools such as *Hootsuite*, *Basecamp*, or *Trello* to assign tasks and keep everybody organized and aligned.

Social media platforms

There are many social media networks, and it can be difficult to know where to start and how to build an online community. To help you get a better understanding, the following are some of the top social media platforms.

PRACTICAL TIP
When building your online communication strategy consider using team collaboration tools such as **Hootsuite**, **Basecamp**, or **Trello** to assign tasks and keep everybody organized and aligned.

HIGHLIGHT
Make use of the different available social media tools to organize, share, monitor or analyse your performance:

Social media scheduling tools: the ability to post in advance across a number of different social media platforms

Social media monitoring tools: the option to view how much exposure you're getting across your different platforms

Social media analytics tools: the capability to analyse who your audience is, what motivates them, what's working and not working, and much more.

SOCIAL MEDIA

TWITTER
www.twitter.com

WHAT IT IS

Twitter is a free online microblogging site, and a global real time information network which can be used to share news, videos and pictures. Twitter was made for short commentary – 280 characters or less – and users can use it to talk about and interact with other individuals and organisations about their work. This network is good for being informed about things happening in real time, and it can help organisations create instant communication with followers and to build networks. Unlike other social networks, you cannot invite people to follow you. You need to build your reputation with good twitter messages (also known as "tweets.") Followers follow other users to see their tweets.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Create a hashtag to help start a conversation or use an existing hashtag to contribute to an ongoing conversation.. Be sure to retweet others to show appreciation and respond if asked a question or tagged in a tweet.

TOOLS FOR MEASURING, CREATING CONTENT, SCHEDULING AND/OR MONITORING:

Account set up and optimum use of the platform: https://help.twitter.com/

Advertising and marketing: https://business.twitter.com/

Twitter blog for updates and news: https://blog.twitter.com/

Tweetdeck to schedule tweets, add filters, monitor mentions and hashtags, and manage unlimited accounts: https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/

Hashtag. While you are in Twitter keep an eye on the popular trends, and find hashtags that are relevant to you, your work, and your field. In this page you will find the definition of hashtags, and its use, the most popular and trending: https://tagdef.com/en/ Another one to search for a specific hashtag and learn how popular it is: https://www.hashtags.org/ or https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/how-to-use-hashtags#

Twitter Analytics to measure engagement and learn how to make your Tweets more successful. Explore the interests, locations, and demographics of your followers: https://analytics.twitter.com/about

How to upload pictures, GIFS and videos on Twitter: https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/tweeting-gifs-and-pictures

POPULAR TWITTER CAMPAIGNS

Here you can read about some of the most impactful Twitter campaigns of 2017 including **#metoo #womensmarch and #puberme**

https://www.meltwater.com/blog/best-social-campaigns-of-2017/

TWITTER TIP: HASHTAG
People use the hashtag symbol (#) before a relevant keyword or phrase in their tweet to categorize those tweets and help them show more easily in Twitter search. Clicking or tapping on a hashtagged word in any message shows you other tweets that include that hashtag. Hashtags can be included anywhere in a tweet. Hashtagged words that become very popular are called Trending Topics.

TWITTER TIP: POSTING
Decide how often you will tweet and how many times per day. Keep your bio up to date. Identify the influencers in your sector. The @ symbol before a Twitter username sends a direct message to that user. Be sure to give credit to influencers with @username, or "thanks @ username."

TWITTER TIP: CHARACTERS
In 2017, Twitter decided to expand it's character limit from 140 to 280. Do not forget that it is not about quantity but how creative, engaging your content is.

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK
www.facebook.com

WHAT IT IS

Facebook is the largest social media platform worldwide. Organisations can share activities, raise awareness, start fundraising campaigns, share content that resonates with them. Take into account that videos are one of the most immersive ways to share on Facebook.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Facebook posts are long-form content – with no character or word limit. You can encourage your fans to post reviews or stories about their experiences on your page. Facebook is a great platform to share insider tips, troubleshoot ideas, meetup (virtually) and send event invites. You can also link your Facebook account to your Twitter account. This can be a time-saving way of posting tweets, as long as you have decided to share similar content in Facebook and Twitter.

TOOLS FOR MEASURING, CREATING CONTENT, SCHEDULING AND/OR MONITORING:

How to create events in Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/help/131325477007622/

Information about tagging, editing content and photos: https://www.facebook.com/help/

To create advertisements with Facebook, and to build an audience for your page: https://www.facebook.com/business/news/audience-insights

Facebook Insights: https://www.facebook.com/help/pages/insights

Facebook Analytics: https://analytics.facebook.com/features

Cover photos: https://www.facebook.com/help/search/?q=cover%20photo

How to upload videos: https://www.facebook.com/help/www/1041553655923544

FACEBOOK TIP: ENGAGEMENT
Don't forget to respond to your followers quickly when they ask questions on your platform. Building relationships with Facebook users takes time and it is a long-term investment.

FACEBOOK TIP: KEY WORDS
Remember to include key words, as Google indexes, and ranks comments, contents and pages.

FACEBOOK TIP: COVER PHOTO
When you're building your profile remember to customize it. Use a unique image that represents your organisation.

SOCIAL MEDIA

YOUTUBE
www.youtube.com

WHAT IT IS

YouTube it is a video-sharing platform that makes it easy to watch online videos. Users have the opportunity to watch videos for free, or to create and upload their own videos. Videos are easy to comment on, rate, and share on social media and blogs. On average, 100 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute. YouTube is also a good platform for creating long videos, and an option for live streaming.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Yo can start creating your own videos, and storyboarding your ideas. Creating a good storyboard is key to tell a good story. Storyboards are illustrations that represent shots that represent a story. For example, storyboards can help you develop your videos. Before you start filming create your storyboard and your script. To start, break down your story into a set of different scenes.
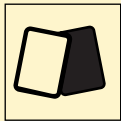
refer to worksheet #3
STORYBOARDING
ON THE NEXT PAGE | You can download a fillable version of the worksheet at http://civicus.org/documents/Worksheet3_Storyboarding.docx

You can create a personal YouTube channel for your organization, and upload videos to your channel. You can upload videos and then share them on your social media platforms.

You can like/comment/share other YouTube videos that are relevant for your organization. You can also use live streaming to share experiences and unscripted responses to events, news, and even unboxings.

TOOLS FOR MEASURING, CREATING CONTENT, SCHEDULING AND/OR MONITORING:

YouTube Live is a fast and powerful way to connect with your audience in the moment. This is a free course by YouTube in livestreaming: https://creatoracademy.youtube.com/page/course/livestream

How to use YouTube analytics. Building a YouTube channel requires you to understand who your audience is and how they're engaging with your videos. YouTube Analytics can tell you about who your audience is, what they like, and what kind of content you should be creating to be successful. https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/1714323?hl=en

YOUTUBE TIP: VIDEOS
- Begin each video with an interesting hook.
- Develop a sustainable video production workflow.
- Create a consistent look and feel.
- Collaborate with other YouTubers. Find channels with similar audiences but different content.
- Live-streaming has a learning curve, but after you've mastered the format, live video is the easiest way to create video content.
- Develop videos as a series.

YOUTUBE TIP: STORYBOARD
Creating a storyboard for the video will help you determine the length, the number of frames and even the voiceover. Take note that it is important to create a storyboard for your video idea before you begin filming. Be sure to write it in a style that works with your audience. Within your script, make sure your message is presented clearly. At the end of the video, you can present a call to action.

UNDERSTANDING + DESIGNING
WORKSHEETS

EXAMPLE WORKSHEET 3: STORYBOARDING

Storyboards are illustrations that represent shots that represent a story. For example, storyboards can help you develop your videos.
Remember that storyboarding is a team-based activity and everyone can contribute. Use this template to organize your visual sequence, and to build your story. This worksheet has been partially completed for you. You can see the video about #thatsnotlove campaign on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JYyHa03x-U

illustrate the scene

SCENE: A YOUNG MAN IN A SOCCER FIELD

A YOUNG WOMAN IN THE STREET

ACTION: WIDE SHOT OF A MAN LOOKING AT THE CAMERA

WIDE SHOT OF A WOMAN LOOKING AT THE CAMERA

VOICEOVER: "BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, I WANT TO BE YOUR ONLY GUY"   "BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, SKIP CLASS WITH ME"
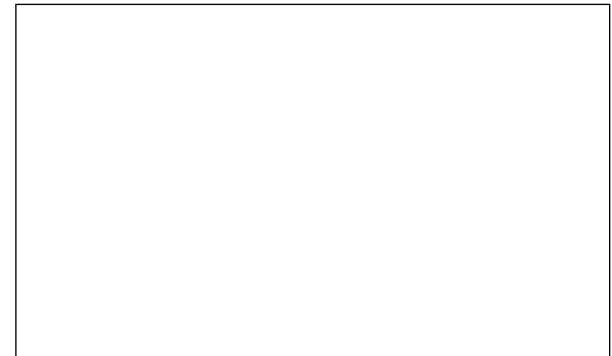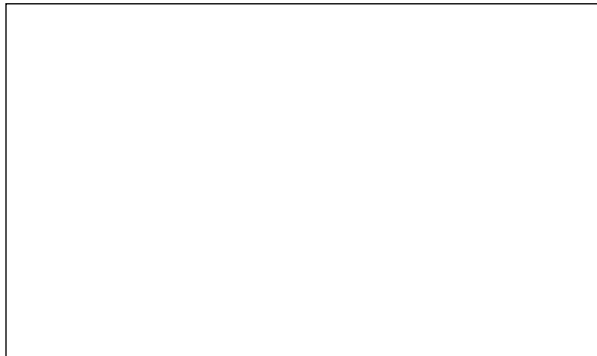
SCENE:

ACTION:

VOICEOVER:

SOCIAL MEDIA

LINKEDIN
www.linkedin.com

WHAT IT IS

LinkedIn is a social site for professionals to connect.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

You can create an organisational profile or share job offers, news from your field, events or opportunities within the organisation. You can post articles about your area of expertise, about your work so you establish yourself as a credible source of information. It is also a great tool for recruitment. This is a professional network and it should be used differently than you use Facebook or Instagram.

TOOLS FOR MEASURING, CREATING CONTENT, SCHEDULING AND/OR MONITORING:

Introduction to Linkedin: https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ZVlUwwgOfKw

How to build your company profile: https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/company-pages and https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answers/companies?lang=en

LINKEDIN TIP: CONNECTIONS
Before you start making connections on Linkedin, refer to your goals and strategy. For example, you might want to connect with potential journalists in a specific field.

LINKEDIN TIP: ENGAGEMENT
Nurture your network. Provide information of value to them. Give a compliment or congratulations on milestones..

SOCIAL MEDIA

INSTAGRAM
www.instagram.com

WHAT IS IT

Instagram is a mobile photo and video application. Instagram uses your mobile phone camera to upload pictures. Instagram is where users can share images or videos, as well as like and comment on images from people, organizations, and brands that they follow. It offers integrations so users can automatically post images to other social networks as well.

Instagram currently offers the possibility of live streaming (live video), and producing online stories (Instagram stories).

Instagram Stories: Instead of the usual posting of carefully chosen single photos, Stories lets you post a bunch of photos that play like a slideshow and each photo or video in the story disappears after 24 hours. They are available for 24 hours. Every day, over 250 million people use Instagram Stories, and it has become one of the fastest growing platforms ever. Instagram stories are 'discoverable', and this means that people who don't follow you can see your posts too. It is a great tool for storytelling, for brand positioning, for promoting events that are happening or going to happen. You can also add hashtags to the stories.

Instagram Live Video: in 2017, Instagram added the possibility to broadcast live video, and then share the replay of the live video once you're done. Instagram also allows you to have your live video available for 24 hours, just like all other story content.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

You can showcase photos of your organisation, your campaigns, images of events, or people who work in your projects. You can be as creative as you want but remember that users are not looking to be advertised to. Make your Instagram feed look thought-provoking and organic. Use compelling images with informative and creative captions.

TOOLS FOR MEASURING, CREATING CONTENT, SCHEDULING AND/OR MONITORING:

The Instagram blog includes **plenty of tips on how to take photos, and their recent updates:** https://business.instagram.com/blog/

How to understand **Instagram stories and Instagram Live.** How to upload a story and other useful tips: https://help.instagram.com/1660923094227526

INSTAGRAM TIP: STORIES
Here are some tips to use Instagram Stories for event promotion:

Provide a sneak peak of the event.

Film "behind-the-scenes" content. You can upload images of the venue (both the interior and exterior), board meetings, equipment setup, and so on.

Encourage attendees to use Instagram Stories. When guests do this, they will indirectly promote your event as it will be viewed by their own followers.


INSTAGRAM TIP: FOLLOWERS
Post at the right time. Before you post your photo to Instagram keep in mind: your audience's time zone and what time they're most often checking Instagram. **Use popular hashtags.** There are popular Instagram hashtags that can be used to get more visibility on your photos. Use 1-3 relevant hashtags per photo. **Host a contest on Instagram. Share candid shots:** Think of a behind-the-scenes look, at the inner workings of your organization. People don't want to see the same highly polished images all the time.

👍
SOCIAL MEDIA
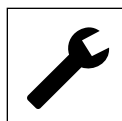
Other tools for monitoring, planning and sharing content on social media

The following tools require some budget, can be more time consuming, and may require advanced knowledge of social media.

SCHEDULE, ORGANISE, ANALYSE AND MONITOR MENTIONS

HOOTSUITE
https://signup.hootsuite.com/

Hootsuite is a social media management tool that allows you to coordinate your posts and presence across social media platforms and your blog. It allows you to schedule posts across multiple platforms, aggregate analytics from multiple accounts in one place.
Other: Hootsuite can function in 17 languages.

MENTIONMAPP
https://mentionmapp.com/

Mentionmapp is an analytic tool for Twitter. This app is good for media mentions monitoring, conversation monitoring, visualizing your analytics and generating graphics, retweeting and liking posts. It is available in English only.

SOCIAL BAKERS
https://www.socialbakers.com

The free tools on Social Bakers will provide statistics on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. It's an excellent way to discover influencers and important topics.

BUFFER
https://buffer.com/
Buffer allows you to schedule posts, analyse performance, and manage all your accounts in one place.

BIT.LY
https://bit.ly
A link shortener than you can use to monitor how many people are clicking on your content. It allows you to insert a long link and shorten it so that it's easier to post on Twitter and other social media. If you create an account, you can monitor how many times people are clicking on your shortened link.

👍
SOCIAL MEDIA

BOOKMARKING TOOLS

Bookmarking is a way or organising information, storing and managing online resources. It includes number of websites where you can enlist or share your webpage, articles, images and videos.

DIGG.COM

http://digg.com/

Digg is one of the top social bookmarking site on which you can easily bookmark your webpage.

SHARING PRESENTATION TOOLS

LINKEDIN SLIDESHARE

http://www.slideshare.net/

Supports videos, webinars, PDFs. Slideshare joined LinkedIn in 2012 and has since grown into a top destination for professional content. More information: https://www.slideshare.net/about

ISSUU

https://issuu.com/

Issuu is a digital discovery and publishing platform that enables users to distribute, measure and monetize their digital content. It allows you easily upload, share and sell content online. More

Checklist for social media

☐ Reply to everyone

☐ Check your mentions

☐ Monitor social media for keywords and phrases

☐ Schedule your updates for the next day

☐ Check out other social media profiles

☐ Curate content to share

☐ Advocacy: make it easy for your team to share

☐ Follow back those who follow you

☐ Check your stats

☐ Engage with influencers

☐ Engage with partners

☐ Weekly goals check-in

☐ Hold a strategy session

☐ Update your social media ads

☐ Goal-setting

☐ Come up with new experiments

REACHING AUDIENCES WITH E-NEWSLETTERS

e-Newsletters

An e-newsletter (email newsletter) is a regularly scheduled email that is personalized for your most important stakeholders. Sending, for example, a weekly e-newsletter is a great way of staying connected with your stakeholders. An e-newsletter allows you to update readers on your latest projects, provide news about your work that might be of interest, and seek support in the form of action or donations. Research indicates that people would rather receive updates from an organisation via an email newsletter than on a social media platform, such as Facebook.

Questions to ask before starting

Starting and maintaining newsletters is a big commitment. Newsletters also require quite a few resources to get them right. You'll need time, content, the right design, and a coherent email list of your audience. Here are some questions to consider before you commit to sending newsletters:

- What content are you going to put into this and future newsletters?
- Are you willing to set aside time to create and curate content
- How often will you send it?

Making your Newsletter great

Here are a few ideas about how to make your newsletter effective and interesting.

KEEP YOUR NEWSLETTERS SWEET AND SHORT

Based on lab testing by the Nielsen Norman Group reported in its *Email Newsletter Usability Report* (https://www.nngroup.com/reports/email-newsletter-design/), the average reader skims a newsletter for 51 seconds. This means that people tend to scan for content that is of interest to them, ignoring what's not. Therefore, it's important that you do not lose your readers by overwhelming them with a lot of text. Make sure your content gets straight to the point, keep your sentences/ paragraphs short and succinct.

SHARE USEFUL CONTENT FOR YOUR READERS

For you to be able to create useful content for your readers, you need to know them. What are their interests, where are they based? Once you have mapped out who your audiences are you can then create content that will be relevant to them. Two areas of interesting content for civil society organizations might be:

Curate content from other organisations: The best place to start is perusing third party content or news other partner or allied organisations are talking about. But don't just grab articles for the sake of filling space. Well-curated content could make your email newsletter an interesting, relevant and up-to-date source of information for your readers. If you do this consistently and in ways that are relevant to your stakeholders, they will appreciate the opportunity to read relevant, up-to-date content from you.

PRACTICAL TIP: STORYTELLING IDEAS FOR YOUR DONOR NEWSLETTER

Stories do the best job of giving donors a tangible example of the work in action. You can share the following stories:

A partner or client success story: this is an example of the impact that is made possible by donations.

The why story: an opportunity to talk about why you do the work you do.

The future story: you paint a picture of what is possible thanks to your organization's work.

PRACTICAL TIP: STORYTELLING

Rules of storytelling: make me care, be intentional, take me with you, delight me, conflict equals story. Take into account that good stories are about challenge or conflict.

Use content from your social media channels: you should always consider your social media accounts a resource for your e-newsletters. You can always recycle content shared in your social media accounts in the newsletter, but you should also be sure to link to your social media accounts as well.

MAKE IT VISUALLY APPEALING AND ACCESSIBLE ACROSS DEVICES

It's always important to make sure that your content is easily accessible. When choosing or creating an email template or design or a mass mailing application, always make sure that your newsletter is also mobile-friendly. You should always include visual content when you can. Images add interest to newsletters and can draw attention to issues you're discussing.

E-Mail service providers

For small organisations, it's best to use a service provider to send e-newsletters. You could certainly compile an email list and use it to send your newsletter, but you'd be missing out on some of the functions and features that a service will provide. Here are two of the most widely used e-newsletter service providers:

MAILCHIMP (www.mailchimp.com) is an email marketing service that calls itself a "marketing automation platform." Of course, as civil society organisations, we're primarily interested in providing stakeholders with information they can use and influencing people in our network to take action. But no matter what your organization does, the analytics included with MailChimp can be very helpful. With the free plan, you receive: built in scheduling function that optimises when emails send time, and built in analytics to track opens and clicks. You can send 12,000 emails a month to a list of up to 2,000 subscribers with MailChimp's Forever Free plan, though a few features are only available to paying users.

BENCHMARK (https://www.benchmarkemail.com/) is similar to MailChimp. The free version allows 14,000 emails per month to 2000 subscribers, and the service includes the same analytics as the MailChimp free version.

You can also search for options of your own – there are numerous reviews of both online services and downloadable programmes that can do the job for you on your own computer.

> **PRACTICAL TIP: MAILING LIST IN GMAIL**
>
> 1. Go to https://google.com/contacts.
>
> 2. In the list on the left, click on "New Group". Name your group.
>
> 3. Once you have named the group, you can add names to it using the button near the top of the page.
>
> 4. Once you've added contacts to your list, you can email the list by typing the name of your new group into the email address space in gmail."

Checklist for e-Newsletters

☐ Does your organisation have the resources (budget, time) to commit to a regular e-newsletter?

☐ Do you know what content your subscribers are most interested in?

☐ Are you caught up on information and stories about other organisations working on similar issues as your organisation?

☐ Have you decided on a service provider?

☐ Are you following up with analytics for your e-newsletter?

Online & creative tools
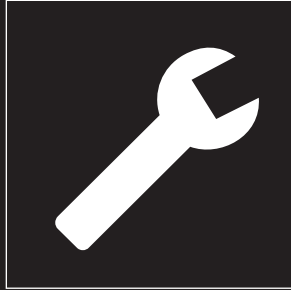
There are many free or very low - cost online tools to help you with designing and creating graphics, audio, and video materials. These tools can be very useful for organisations with small budgets and time to try many design ideas. You should always consider hiring a professional when creating materials that represent you and your organisation or are mission critical, but many organisations use these online tools to create a preliminary design that can be shared with a graphic artist, video or audio editor. Most free tools also include a paid version, so if you become an expert and need more capability, you can upgrade. Here are a couple of our **favourite online tools** for design:

GRAPHICS

CANVA
www.canva.com

Canva allows you to create logos, infographics, and other graphic materials. There are numerous free templates and design elements you can use to customize your graphics.

PIKTOCHART
www.piktochart.com

Piktochart allows you to create infographics and presentations online and include them on your website.

VIDEO

LUMEN
www.lumen5.com

Lumen5 allows you to create video for social platforms using free stock footage and photos. The service takes content from a blog post or social media platform and transforms the text into video.

AUDIO
AUDACITY
https://www.audacityteam.org/

The best free audio editor is Audacity, which is a downloadable programme that runs on your own computer. You can use Audacity to create audio content for video, for radio, or other downloadable audio, such as a podcast.

PICTURE EDITING

Your e-newsletter, website, and social media platforms will be better if you include photos. These are two of our favourite free photography sites.

UNSPLASH
www.unsplash.com

Unsplash has a large collection of fully free, downloadable images that are shared by professional photographers. They also send a weekly e-newsletter with a curated collection of photographs.

PXHERE
www.pxhere.com

Pxere is an online repository of fully free images you can use for whatever you like.

POTOR
www.fotor.com

Fotor allows you to create photo montages and collages.

PODCASTS
A podcast is a downloadable audio file that listeners subscribe to using an app like Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, or Podbean. Creators upload their content to a podcasts server and the app notifies the listener that a new episode is available.

Podcasts come in all shapes and sizes. From one – on – one interviews, to serial dramas, listeners can find whatever podcast suits their interest. The key to a successful podcast is your ability to create consistent content – whether it's a short daily or longer weekly podcast, you need to be prepared to record, edit, and upload the content consistently, particularly after your audience begins to expect regular episodes.

Once you have a following for your podcast, you can use them to share links to your website, your social media platforms, and any other content you're working on. Many podcast creators monetize their podcasts through advertisers, and others ask listeners for donations to keep things going. Whatever you decide about monetizing your podcast, the most important thing to remember if you decide to start one is that you'll need to commit to creating content!

Podcasts are often recorded using a simple audio editor like Audacity. Once the recording is complete, the file is uploaded to a service like Libsyn, Podbean, or Buzzsprout. All of these companies charge a fee to host a podcast, but depending on how many episodes you upload, the fee is small – generally between $5 and $15 per month.

For more information on podcasting:
www.podcastinsights.com.

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