COUNTERING HATE SPEECH AGAINST DIVERSITY

CHAD

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A TOOLKIT TO COUNTER ONLINE HATE SPEECH AND HURTFUL SPEECH AGAINST VULNERABLE GROUPS

Contents

INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is the culmination of a comprehensive two-year initiative entitled 'Countering Hate Speech and Hurtful Speech against Diversity: Roma, LGBTIQ, Jewish, and Migrant Communities'. Over this period, four organizations collaborated to devise strategies and tools aimed at identifying and effectively countering hate speech targeting LGBTQ, Jewish, Migrant, Muslim and Roma communities.

This manual offers a diverse array of methods for addressing online hate speech, encompassing actionable steps for intervention. These interventions can be implemented sequentially or selected based on contextual relevance to address specific issues.

The toolkit commences with strategies for identifying and mapping the scope of the issue, followed by approaches to engage various stakeholders capable of intervening in hate speech, including NGOs, media workers, and decision-makers.

The collaborative effort behind this project involved Budapest Pride, Haver Foundation, Phiren Amenca, and Political Capital. While hate speech affects vulnerable groups differently, collective action is essential to confront it effectively. The CHAD project exemplified how LGBTQ, Jewish, and Roma communities, alongside a political think tank, can collaborate toward a shared objective of combating hate speech, serving as a model for future partnerships.

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MAPPING THE ISSUE AND FOSTERING COHESIVE ALLIANCES

To effectively address hate speech, it is imperative to undertake a comprehensive examination of its origins, manifestations, and impacts on vulnerable communities, as well as its broader implications for mainstream society. Extensive scholarly and policy literature at both national and international levels offers insights into the defining features of hate speech, its dissemination patterns, targets, prevailing and emerging trends, and the psychological underpinnings of its perpetrators. In this initiative, a thorough desk research phase was followed by the development of a monitoring tool designed to track instances of online hate speech and hurtful speech directed towards Roma, LGBTIQ, Jewish, and Migrant communities. Detailed insights into the methodology employed and the outcomes obtained are elaborated upon in our research publication.

While it is widely acknowledged among participating organizations and communities targeted by hate that online hate speech and harmful rhetoric detrimentally impact all communities, and collaborative endeavors hold promise for achieving more substantial outcomes, there exists a recognition that membership in one or multiple minority groups does not necessarily equate to a comprehensive understanding of stereotypes, biases, and forms of discrimination experienced by other communities. Thus, to cultivate a shared understanding of the challenges posed by hate speech and its repercussions on our respective communities, a „cross-sensitization" event – a team-building retreat – was convened early in the project, bringing together project staff and young individuals representing each community.

Facilitating opportunities for inter-community acquaintance and team-building exercises, and allowing sufficient time for members from diverse backgrounds to familiarize with each other's experiences, struggles, and objectives, fosters solidarity that transcends project boundaries, enabling enduring collaboration and mutual support. Non-formal educational workshops, led by representatives of minority communities, delve into topics such as identity, the circumstances facing vulnerable groups, and the dynamics of prejudice they encounter. These sessions cultivate empathy, facilitate the identification of shared experiences, and provide a platform for critically analyzing how systems of power and discrimination affect communities differently.

WORKING DEFINITION OF HATE SPEECH

Although there's no global consensus on the precise definition of hate speech, the Council of Europe's Recommendation No. CM/Rec(2022)16 on combating hate speech offers a widely acknowledged interpretation. This definition, often considered one of the broadest, helps to establish a framework for understanding hate speech internationally.

> *hate speech is understood as all types of expression that incite, promote, spread or justify violence, hatred or discrimination against a person or group of persons, or that denigrates them, by reason of their real or attributed personal characteristics or status such as "race",[2] colour, language, religion, nationality, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.*

In this project, we also employed the term „hurtful speech" to refer to expressions and utterances that, while not falling under the narrow legal definition of hate speech as outlined by national or international organizations, are nonetheless hateful and have harmful effects.

Activities

The following section contains the outlines of the workshop we organized for the three main stakeholder groups throughout the project: the NGO sector, journalists and decision-makers. We firmly believe that these workshops played a pivotal role in fostering engagement among stakeholders, equipping them with both theoretical insights and practical strategies to combat hate speech within their domains. Notably, these activities require no specialized equipment or resources, and we aspire for them to serve as invaluable blueprints for other organizations looking to undertake similar initiatives within their unique contexts.

Creating alternative narratives together with NGO-s active on the field

Summary

Engaging relevant organizations actively working in the field is imperative, providing them with a platform to articulate responses and share experiences in tackling hate speech. Through workshops, NGOs can exchange insights and explore effective responses, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and tools to counter hate speech effectively.

Those non-profit organizations should be invited who are active in the exact field. For instance, in the CHAD project we focused on hate speech and hurtful speech against Jewish, LGBTQ, Refugees and Migrants and Roma communities, therefore we invited those organizations who are working with and/or representing these communities. This workshop equips NGOs with the knowledge, skills, and practical tools necessary to develop and implement effective counter and alternative narratives against hate speech. The event can be arranged either domestically or on an international scale.

PREPARATION

- ○ Careful selection of the participants

- ○ Organizing the workshop in suitable venues with breakout rooms

- ○ Preparation and collection of relevant literature on countering hate speech

- ○ Preparation of the content of the one day workshop

- ○ Collecting the most recent literature on countering hate speech with alternative narratives (see at the end of this toolkit)

1. MAPPING THE PROBLEM WITH EXPERTS

SUMMARY

Hate speech is everywhere and it is self-explanatory that we need to tackle it in some ways. However, in order to be effective we need to first map the concrete problem in the local context. Therefore it is important to do the mapping phase with representatives of those organizations and experts who have experience in the concrete field.

Time: 90 minutes

Group Size: 10-20

Objectives

- To explore the root causes of existing hate speech in the concrete context

- To understand the different elements, targeted group and those platforms where hate speech occurs

- To specify the exact problem we want to focus on

Materials

Internet connection, laptop, projector, projection screen, speakers, flipchart board, flipchart paper, colored markers, colored pencils, post-it notes (in 3-5 different colors), adhesive tape, Blu-Tack adhesive, photocopying and printing facilities.

PREPARATION

Set up the working room with three tables with 1-1 flipchart paper on each, and enough chairs around the tables so that groups can sit around and can access the paper. Each flipchart contains a different question:

- What are the underlying causes of hate speech within the particular context you wish to address (e.g., national, local, online)?

- What are the various forms and expressions of hate speech, which are the key actors, platforms, targets, and distinctive traits?

- What is the legal, political and societal landscape line that allows shaping the environment in which hate speech thrives?

INSTRUCTIONS

Form small working groups composed of 4-5 individuals. Allocate 20 minutes for them to discuss and answer the questions and to take notes on the flipchart. Rotate the groups through three rounds of discussion, and tell the groups to add their own insights to all the flipcharts. At the last round, when each group arrives back to its original topic, give them some time to review what the others added to their flipchart, then invite each group to present their findings to all the participants.

2. Introduction of Proactive and Reactive Responses to Hate Speech

Summary

Oftentimes NGO-s feel that they are unable to respond to hate speech properly and they do not have any tools to face it. By providing them the tools with which they can be proactive not only reactive, we enable them to feel empowered.

Objectives

- introducing all available tools in the hand of the NGO-s with which they can respond to hate speech effectively

- help them to think about and design some alternative or counter narratives

Phase 1: Reactive means

Time: 90 minutes

Group size: 10-20

Objectives:

- Exchange of the existing practices and possibilities

- Mapping the different reactive steps which can be taken to tackle online hate speech, such as notification of authorities, legal recourse, removal/concealment of online hate speech content, reporting to the social media platform, etc.

Preparation

Prepare a presentation about the reactive means which can be used for countering hate speech online.

Instructions

Deliver the presentation in around 30 minutes. Subsequently, give space to an open discussion about the practices, experiences, successes and failures of the participants with the reactive methods. This can take up to one hour depending on the profile and insights of the NGO representatives present.

Phase 2: Proactive means: counter and alternative narratives

Time: at least 180 minutes

Groups size: 10-20

Instructions:

Start with the frontal presentation of the concept of counter and alternative narratives including a Q and A!

The basic content that should be included:

- Counter-narrative: Directly responds to an oppressive narrative to undermine authority and myths that oppression relies on. It targets the sympathizers of extremist views or groups. It works on a smaller scale and within a short time frame.

- Alternative narrative: An alternative explanation/story, presenting a different perspective while adhering to principles of human rights, democratic values, and inclusivity, envisioning a broader societal vision. A coherent narrative where characters and events logically connect. It targets broader society in a longer time frame.

- After the clear understanding of counter and alternative narratives the participants of the workshop will need to create a plan for a counter or alternative narratives specifically designed to address the hate speech that the vulnerable group faces. In order to be effective with this task they should be divided into groups based on the focus of their organization. Ideally one group should contain 2-5 people.

The steps are the following:

- Understanding the narrative against which we want to formulate the counter or alternative narrative (Who are the actors? What is the content? What emotions does it evoke, what language does it use?)

- Designing the counter or alternative narrative: with what purpose, how, using what tools, when, for which target group do we build the narrative.

- Discussing the 3 important factors: emotional connection to the specific group, spatial and temporal relevance.

- Planning of the implementation phase: What are the different phases of the implementation? What are the bigger milestones?

- Planning of monitoring and evaluation: determining success indicators

WORKSHOP WITH FUTURE MEDIA WORKERS, JOURNALISTS

Summary

As media professionals play a crucial role in shaping public opinion, it's vital to recognize them as potential disseminators. Consequently, training them becomes imperative to ensure accurate information dissemination. Through our project, we discovered that journalists often lack adequate training on topics concerning minorities, hate speech, and their connection to relevant NGOs. In this overview, we will introduce the workshop we developed for aspiring media professionals and journalists. This workshop aims to equip them with the necessary knowledge to effectively communicate about vulnerable groups and to contribute conscientiously to combating the spread of hate speech.

POSSIBLE PARTNERS OF THE WORKSHOP

To achieve the desired outreach, it is recommended to establish contact with universities or other educational institutions where future media professionals are undergoing training. This step is crucial for several reasons:

- they have a wide outreach

- the workshop can be embedded in the curriculum as a compulsory part

- university teachers have the most exact information on the knowledge level of the students, together with them the workshop can be tailored to their needs.

Time: At least 180 minutes

Objectives:

○ To provide practical knowledge and tips for future media workers on how to represent vulnerable groups in their pieces

○ To connect future media workers with the NGO-s they should be reaching out to for contents on certain vulnerable groups

Instructions:

The workshop consists of two parts. In the first part, participants analyze video content about vulnerable groups created by various news outlets. The selected materials should have good intentions towards the groups depicted however, the execution may be inappropriate, stereotypical, or convey problematic messages. These videos should be chosen in advance by NGOs working with these specific groups (those who participated in the previous workshop). Ideally, the videos should not exceed 6-8 minutes in length and there should be 4-6 videos offered up for analysis, each depicting different groups.

1. Divide participants into groups of 5-10 individuals (depending on the size of the group)

2. Each group is given one video to watch. They are asked to identify the issues with the content and propose suggestions for changes to avoid these mistakes along the questions below. They are given 20 minutes plus the time for watching the video.

What are the problems with the representation presented in the video, and what would you do differently in terms of

- the composition of the speakers,
- the presentation of the environment,
- the main message?

What was the author's intention and how does it come across?

To what extent does the visual support or contradict the intended message?

How can we evaluate this depiction from an ethical standpoint?

3. Each group is asked to select one person who will present their findings in 5-5 minutes with no feedback this time.

The second phase of the workshop is a roundtable discussion where experts who are working on the media representation of the different vulnerable groups are invited (at least three local experts who are working with different vulnerable groups, and practicing journalists with an expertise in creating content about issues affecting different minorities).

1. All the videos are screened to the whole group one after the other.
2. Invited experts and practicing journalists share their experiences about the topic as well as they comment on the videos.
3. The students are given the opportunity to share the results of their small group discussions and ask questions from the experts.

At the end of the workshop they receive the contact details of those organisations who are relevant for the field (previously collected from the NGO-s who participated in the workshop on counter and alternative narratives).

WORKSHOP WITH DECISION-MAKERS

Summary

It is a shared experience for all of us that the discourse surrounding minorities is one of the most tumultuous arenas within the political landscape. This becomes even more pronounced as political campaign periods draw nearer. This workshop aims at gathering decision-makers to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively address hate speech.

During the workshop, participants will engage in interactive sessions designed to explore the complexities of hate speech, its impact on individuals and communities, and strategies for countering it effectively. Through case studies and expert-led discussions, participants will gain insights into identifying and combatting hate speech in various contexts.

Moreover, the workshop provides a platform for decision-makers to share best practices, exchange ideas, and develop collaborative approaches to promote tolerance, inclusivity, and respect for diversity within their spheres of influence.

Possible Participants

- decision-makers from local governments who have concrete experiences on the field as well as reach out to the local community and institutions

- decision-makers from all level who are dealing with vulnerable groups, social issues, minority issues, different communities

Objectives

- giving the possibility to decision-makers to share best practices in relation to their work on tackling hate speech

- providing them with practical tools and strategies to cultivate a more inclusive and respectful political discourse

- connect decision-makers with the NGO-s who should be reaching out to develop initiatives to counter hate speech and embed their recommendations to their practices

INSTRUCTIONS

The first session of the workshop should focus on hate speech, including its definitions and legal context, as well as the challenges inherent in addressing it. After the 15 minutes long presentation, participants have the opportunity to share their experiences and engage in moderated discussions to explore various approaches to combat hate speech.

TIME FRAME: 90 minutes

The second part focuses on counter and alternative narratives. A presentation of the main definitions (similarly as in the workshop for NGO-s) is followed by showcasing international best practices and facilitated discussions on their practical application.

TIME FRAME: 90 minutes

In the third session participants will engage in discussions on proposals formulated by civil society organizations. The proposals should be collected beforehand (through informal discussions or a survey for example). This session should start with the summary of the recommendations, followed by a discussion to fostering collaboration and to developing actionable strategies to tackle hate speech effectively.

TIME FRAME: 90 minutes

List of good practices and tools

FOR NGO-S, YOUTH WORKERS AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATIONAL PRACTITIONERS

DO YOU STEP IN? – Manual for combating hate speech and antigypsyism online and offline | Phiren Amenca

Bookmarks: A manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education Bookmarks/ Connexions - No Hate Speech Youth Campaign (coe.int)

We Can! Taking Action against Hate Speech through Counter and Alternative Narratives: We CAN!/ Alternatives - No Hate Speech Youth Campaign (coe.int)

VIDEOS

No Hate Ninja Project - A Story About Cats, Unicorns and Hate Speech :
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kp7ww3KvccE

Attraction Juniors bring POWERFUL anti-bullying story with shadow dance:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsYs3ZwbcQs

No Hate Speech Movement official Campaign video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=35rAykWyPrg

FOR JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA PROFESSIONALS

BBC Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2021-2023:
https://www.bbc.com/diversity/documents/bbc-diversity-and-inclusion-plan20-23.pdf

FOR DECISION-MAKERS

- Human Rights Cities Network: Human Rights Cities Network

  - Support tool for mayors, local administrations and grassroots organisations on Human Rights Cities: Human rights cities in the EU: a framework for reinforcing rights locally | European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (europa.eu)

- Intercultural Cities Programme: Intercultural Cities - Home - Intercultural cities programme (coe.int)

  - The intercultural city step by step: A practical guide for applying the urban model of intercultural inclusion: 168048da42s (coe.int)

  - Antirumours tools: Anti-rumours - Intercultural cities programme (coe.int)

- Toolkit on combating hate speech during electoral processes: 1680aa1ee1 (coe.int)

- Strong Cities Network: https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/resource/a-guide-for-cities/

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