CYBER GUARDIANS

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO POSITIVELY TRANSFORM SOCIAL MEDIA IN SRI LANKA

SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND
JANUARY 2020
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Social media has the power to positively or negatively affect not only those who engage with it, but also our wider society. Given the power it holds in today’s world, it is important to ensure that it is used positively and with good intentions.

The Cyber Guardians programme empowers youth to play a positive role in the social media space and promote reconciliation and pluralism. The programme promotes social cohesion and reconciliation by engaging youth across identity groups and creating attitudinal changes towards engagement with social media. The programme consists of two components.

1. Cyber Guardians Boot Camp:
   a three-day residential training programme focused on training regional youth who are interested in learning about responsible use of social media.

2. Cyber Guardians National Champions:
   a capacity development programme for youth with advanced social media usage and large followings (e.g. Social Media Influencers, Page admins of popular Facebook pages etc).

The Cyber Guardians programme revolves mainly around Content, Countering and Champions. The aims and objectives of the Cyber Guardians programme are:

- To develop skills of youth to combat hate speech via social media and create social media content that promotes pluralism and peaceful messaging;

- To create opportunities for collaboration among participating youth and with key external stakeholders in the peacebuilding and online arenas.

The first part of the resource pack contains the training module for the three-day residential Social Media Boot Camps that were focused on training regional youth who are interested in learning about responsible use of social media. The second part of the resource pack documents the process taken in engaging and building capacities of the National Champions.

This two-part resource pack provides a comprehensive compilation of the methodologies, tools and resources used in the Cyber Guardians programme. The resource pack can be used for designing trainings and workshops on the responsible use of social media such as the Cyber Guardians Boot Camp.
Part 1: CYBER GUARDIANS BOOT CAMP
Conducting a Cyber Guardians Boot Camp will involve some prior planning and preparation. In this section of the resource pack, some key considerations when planning a Boot Camp are discussed.

**Checklist**

- Setting date for training
- Specification of equipment needed
- Identification of suitable venue
- Booking of venue
- Inviting speakers, including deadlines for handouts, summaries etc.
- Confirming speakers
- Draft programme
- Advertising
- Registration of participants
- Confirmation to participants
- Catering requirements and orders
- Copying of handouts and other training material
- Development of evaluation form
- Production of certificates

**Venue and space requirement**

You will need a large meeting group with space for group work or a small meeting room with several breakout rooms. The workshop room should ideally be an enclosed space as most of the sessions have power-point presentations, and videos with audio. As the programme is a three-day residential workshop, having outdoor space for games and activities will also be useful.

Equipment and material needed for team building activities is listed separately under the description of each activity. What you need for each session will depend on the activities you choose to do.

However, there are key training equipment and material you will need for each Boot Camp, irrespective of the specific sessions and activities conducted. The equipment and material listed below are essential for any Cyber Guardians Boot Camp.

- Projector and screen
- Microphone, Speakers and audio output cables (aux cables with enough length)
- Enough laptops with OpenShot software installed and all personal accounts logged out (1 laptop for projector and at least one laptop for every 5 participants)
- Wi-Fi connection with enough bandwidth
- Extension cords/ power supply for all laptops, speakers, projectors
- 2 Pen drives (for copying content developed by participants etc.)
- Flipchart
- Sticky notes
- Markers

*Remember to also have an inventory handling signing list to make sure the laptops and other equipment handed over to participants are not damaged.*
# Recommended Timetable

## Day 01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Check in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5pm – 6.30 pm</td>
<td>Introduction to the camp + Connecting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 1: About Me</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity 2: Step into the Circle</td>
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<td>Activity 3: Balloon Activity</td>
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</tbody>
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## Day 02

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30 am – 9.15 am</td>
<td>Team building: Line Yourself Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.15 am – 9.45 am</td>
<td>What is Social Media? Global and local insights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.45 am – 10.15 am</td>
<td>Power of Social Media: The positive and the negative aspects of Campaigns and Influencers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.15 am – 10.30 am</td>
<td>Tea Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 am – 11.30 am</td>
<td>Understanding Social Media Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.30 am – 12.30 pm</td>
<td>Social Media Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30 pm – 1.30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.30 pm – 2.00 pm</td>
<td>Freedom of speech vs. Hate speech: Knowing the boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm – 3.15 pm</td>
<td>Fake News and Hate Speech: Understanding the negative impact of the global phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15 pm – 3.45 pm</td>
<td>Tea Break with Activity 5: Food Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.45 pm – 4.45 pm</td>
<td>How to protect your privacy in SM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.45 pm – 5.15 pm</td>
<td>Basics of boosting on Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.15 pm – 5.30 pm</td>
<td>Activity: Recap and reflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Day 03

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30 am – 9.00 am</td>
<td>Team building and strategizing: Spaghetti Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 am – 10.00 am</td>
<td>Countering Fake News and Hate Speech – Image based Content Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00 am – 10.15 am</td>
<td>Tea Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.15 am – 11.00 am</td>
<td>Countering Fake News and Hate Speech – Image based Content Development continued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 am – 1.00 pm</td>
<td>Digital Story Telling – Creating video-based content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 noon – 2.00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm – 3.45 pm</td>
<td>Digital Story Telling – Creating video-based content continued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.45 pm – 4.00 pm</td>
<td>Recap and certificate presenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00 pm – 4.30 pm</td>
<td>Tea break and end of training</td>
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Session 1: What is social media?

Social media is largely used for creating conversations and collaborating. It is not about increasing the number of “likes” you receive or having more followers, but about engagement and starting conversations. Social media offers many functions to its user.

What makes social media different to other kinds of media?

• Social media is more accessible than other types of media. It is does not require any permission and anyone can share anything at any time.
• Social media is also incredibly short. Few words are used. Instead, many abbreviations, emojis and images are preferred.
• Social media is spontaneous. Content is inspired by what is current and “trending” locally and globally.
• Social media is relaxed and easy going. There are no formal guidelines for how to engage on social media, and everyone is open to criticism.
• Social media is fleeting. Most content is created on the go but can be analysed, aggregated and data-mined later.

What is a meme?

A meme is an activity, concept, catchphrase or piece of media which spreads, often as mimicry, from person to person via the web. Memes may evolve over time, by chance or through commentary, imitations, parody, or by incorporating news accounts about itself. Memes are largely satire or caricature.

Meme culture

Meme culture is another factor that is completely unique to social media.
Some elements of memes are:

- The creator remains anonymous
- There are few words and simple images
- Humour and satire are often key elements
- Timing of release matters
- Some memes are timeless
- Memes get edited/added on
- Some consider memes to be a modern version of graffiti

Social media engagement

Social media can engage people and inspire change. It is not just a numbers game (likes or followers). Number should not be taken as a measure as it can easily be bought through “click-farms”.

Level of engagement matters more. Those leaving comments and starting discussions because of your content and sharing your content should matter more.

Examples of successful social media campaigns that generated engagement include #blueforsudan and the #IVotedSL.
Session 2: Understanding social media and culture

Citizen journalism and new media, brought on by the advent of the internet revolution and social media, has democratized information on a large scale. However, there are also many risks to consider when consuming and creating independent investigative content. It is important to understand social media and the risks associated with creating and consuming such content. This session examines the change in media over time and looks at the pros and cons of new media.

Media then and now

Media then was passive and inactive. People were only recipients and had no power to decide what media was available to them. Now media is active and participatory. Consumers are also contributors and are empowered in how and what they consume.

Media has changed over time due to the democratization of information sharing. The key enablers of the democratization of information are:

- The Internet Revolution
- Social Media
- Mobile Devices
- Digital Tools
- Connectivity
- Digital Literacy

Media then
Passive and inactive

Media now
Active and participatory

Journalism over time

“Traditional journalism provides the view from the outside looking in, and Citizen Journalism provides the view from the inside looking out. In order to tell the complete story, you need both points of view.”

-Mitch Gehman-

Journalism over time has also evolved from its traditional roots, particularly through mainstream media channels to, to a more citizen led form of journalism through new media. Both mediums have benefits as well as disadvantages.
Mainstream media

- Professional
- High level of control
- Conglomerates
- Costly

New media

- Amateur
- Organic
- Democratic
- Nearly free

Mainstream media is professional, has a high level of control, conglomerates, and is costly. This is the medium through which most traditional journalism is conducted. Whereas, new media allows amateurs to disseminate information, it is organic, democratic, and nearly free. This is the medium through which most citizen journalism is conducted.

Tilting the power scale

“When the people formerly known as the audience employ the press tools they have in their possession to inform one another, that’s CITIZEN JOURNALISM.”

-Jey Rosen-

The increase in citizen journalism has also shifted the power and participation in media and information from a few to the majority.

The Participation Scale

Old Power Behaviors

- Complying
- Consuming

New Power Behaviors

- Sharing
- Affiliating
- Adapting
- Funding
- Producing
- Shaping

Traditional Consumption

- Sharing Other people’s Content or Ideas
- Endosing or Joining a New Power Community
- Remixing other people’s content or ideas
- Affiliating with money within a New Power community
- Creating or delivering content or assets within a New Power community
- Shaping or Protecting the norms of a New Power Community
Pros and cons of new media and citizen journalism

**Pros**
- Investigative journalism contributes to democracy
- exposes corruption
- provides a public service
- holds people in prominent positions accountable
- reveals injustice
- investigative stories only require that the allegations prove probability of guilt
- making a difference through truth telling

**Cons**
- Possible impact of false information
- inability to get access to people for interviews
- people don’t always tell the truth
- citizen journalists lack institutional support
- no information available or access to documents
- potential retribution
- threats to personal security
- limited time and budget, lawsuits

Session 3: Social media strategies
Hashtags are one of the most powerful and effective social media tools available. In this session participants learn about the power hashtags and how to use it well.

**Power of hashtags**
When used strategically and creatively, hashtags can be very powerful in a social media campaign. But first, it is important to know what a hashtag is and how it is used.

**What is a hashtag?**
- A hashtag is: # + [a word] e.g. #EasterSundayAttacksLK
- A hashtag is used to tag or group content related to a common topic.
- A hashtag is a hyperlink: a click> search
- A hashtag is used to filter content and to find people who share the same interest.
- A hashtag is used to pull your brand or story in online conversations.
Hashtag campaigns

There are several successful hashtag campaigns. #everydayafrica is one such campaign that is changing the narrative about Africa by simply using a hashtag.

Other uses of Hashtags

- To engage with other users (ex. P&G #ThankYouMom)
- To promote entertainment (ex. #SuperSinger)
- To collect photos (ex. Pictures from a wedding or event with its own hashtag)
- Build your brand by following the likes and dislikes of customers through hashtags
Session 4: Freedom of speech vs hate speech

“Everyone shall have the right of Freedom of Speech, this right shall include Freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice”

_Article 19, Universal Declaration of Human Rights_

Free speech is the right to express one’s opinion via any media limits. This expression must be free from any outside interruptions or fear of revenge or torture.

**Why is Freedom of Expression important?**

Freedom of Expression is important because it is a way to:
- Ensure the entire fulfilment of skills of an individual and to stimulate their development.
- Understand the situation of society and improve knowledge
- Participate in decision making processes
- Help achieve sustainability in a society

**Why is Freedom of Expression in danger?**

“Your liberty to swing your arms ends where my nose begins.”

_— Stuart Chase_

While Freedom of Expression should be a human right, when it is used to harm others, it becomes an abuse of this right. This misuse includes bullying, rights and access to information are being unnecessarily or controlled and the prevalence of restrictive laws. Such acts take place offline and online and have become a danger to the core value of the Freedom of Expression.

_Freedom of Expression is not a license to abuse. It is a responsibility._

_The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:_

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), a document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly consists of 30 articles affirming an individual’s rights. Article 19 in the UDHR highlights Freedom of Expression as a human right. The Declaration was the first step in the process of formulating the International Bill of Human Rights.
What is Hate Speech?

Hate speech attacks a person or a group based on protected attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. It is an abuse of the Freedom of Expression. It can occur both online and offline but with the advent of social media, it has become more prevalent.
Session 5: Fake News

The term “fake news” has become a popular term in recent times. With the advances in software and social media tools, it is increasingly becoming easier for fake news to spread and create hate and division among groups. But in order to combat fake news, we first need to understand where it comes from and how to identify it.

Types of Information Disorder

There are three types of information that vary in terms of their falseness and intent to harm.

- **Misinformation**: Unintentional mistakes such as inaccurate photo captions, dates, statistics, translations, or when satire is taken seriously.
- **Disinformation**: Fabricated or deliberately manipulated audio/visual content. Intentionally created conspiracy theories or rumours.
- **Malinformation**: Deliberate publication of private information for personal or corporate rather than public interest, such as revenge porn. Deliberate change of context, date or time of genuine content.

What is Fake News?

Fake news is information that is presented as being true but is factually incorrect. Fake news can be classified in two ways.

- By purpose
- By knowledge
Classification based on purpose

Classifying fake news based on purpose depends on the intention behind the act of sharing or spreading the news.

**Unintentional Sharing of False Information**: sharing of false information is not always with the intention of spreading fake news. Unintended dissemination can be due to misunderstanding, negligence, and bias.

**Purposely Sharing False Information**: when individuals share false information with the

Classification based on knowledge

Classification based on knowledge depends on whether the “news” is someone’s opinion or based on facts.

- **Opinion**: False information is based on opinion and is not shared or created based on fact.
- **Fact**: False information based on fact, but still deviates from the truth

Origins of fake news

New forms of media provide information hubs that have no quality control or ability to distinguish between true or false information. Information can be created by individuals, groups, organizations, political parties, political institutions, etc. making it easy for fake news to be created and spread.

Why do people believe fake news?

A few reasons why people believe fake news include the fact that:
- Information can be shared very quickly
- People cannot tell between fact or fiction
- There is so much information being circulated
- Much of the information is biased

Types of fake news

There are some forms of fake news that are more commonly shared.

**Clickbait**

Fabricated stories created to attract viewers an increase income for websites. These stories are created in a way that compromises truth and clarity to get viewer attention.

**Man Tries to Hug a Wild Lion, You Won’t Believe What Happens Next!**

**Dermatologists Hate Her!**

She is 51 Looks 25
Local mom exposes shocking anti-aging secret. Learn the $5 trick to her stunning results.

LEARN THE TRUTH NOW
False Headlines
Publishing news stories with extreme headlines for the story to go viral or get the attention of viewers.

Satire/Parody
News stores created for entertainment or mockery.

Propaganda
Stories created to mislead viewers and promote a biased view, political opinion, or agenda.

Biased News
People look for news that affirms their own beliefs, so stories are created that exploits this desire.

Sloppy Journalism
Sometimes reporters or journalists come up with unbelievable information without verification.
Session 6: Countering hate speech and fake news

In order to counter hate speech and fake news, we need to be able to identify the fake images and videos, particularly those made with malicious intent, from the real ones.

How to identify fake news

Identifying fake news isn’t always easy but there are some tips and tools that are helpful to do so.

Firstly, check if the news:
- Is making outrageous claims
- Is generated from a reputed company
- Is from a URL that looks off
- Contains sloppy writing
- Has a lack of quotes

The following YouTube video provides some helpful tools and techniques to identify fake news.

Identifying fake photos

You can identify fake photos by doing a reverse search on the photo. To do this right click on an image and select “Search Google for image”.

The trick to detecting fake news is to track the claim / image or video to its original source as much as possible. Are you looking at the original version of the content?

“Truth or Fake” with the Observer
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJDFeXomVvg
Identifying fake videos is harder but can be done using YouTube Data Viewer.

How to use YouTube Data Viewer:
1. Search for the site on google. (https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/)
2. Copy and paste the YouTube video link on the YouTube Data Viewer search bar.
3. The video is then broken up into thumbnails allowing you to look for other instances of the video online.

However, it is also important to note that it is not always possible to track the original.

When you have been able to track the original version ask the following questions.
- Who created the original content? Is it an anonymous source? If not run a search - reverse search profile photo + other info on Google/Facebook/Twitter.
- When was the piece of content captured? Reverse search may indicate other timestamps than what's indicated in the content you are looking at.
- Where was the piece of content captured? Look for clues in the claim/background, use mapping tools etc.
- Why was the piece of content captured? Some background on the accounts may indicate motivation.
Identifying fake sounds

In some cases, the video might be real but the sound can be altered. This could be just a word or phrase added on to an existing video or even a whole soundtrack.

Look for clues in the video and see if you can find other videos of the same event using a google search. This will help you determine if the sound in the video is real or added later.

Deepfakes

Deepfakes can add the voice and video of an actor on to someone else’s image. It is done using specialised software. For the time being Deepfakes are mostly used in jest for comedic purposes but could easily be used maliciously in the future. Therefore, it is important to be cautious of potential deepfake videos and watch closely for signs of graphic manipulation.

Why it is important to counter fake news

It is of vital importance that we counter fake news as it has the potential cause much harm to its target groups. It has been used by malicious groups to cause conflict and division and spread hate.

The Sainthamarthu Incident in Sri Lanka is a good example of how harmful fake news can be.

Sainthamurthu Case

On 26 April 2019, there was a clash between Sri Lankan security forces and National Thowheeth Jama’ath militants linked to the Islamic State of Iraq. The clash arose when security forces raided a house in the town of Sainthamaruthu in Ampara District. The house was by the militants to manufacture explosives and suicide vests.

16 persons died in the clash. Three suicide bombers blew themselves up, killing nine of their family members, including six children, while four other suspects were shot dead by the soldiers.

During the coverage of this raid, a piece of news claiming that 11 security forces went viral across social media.
The story went even further when UPFA Kalutara District MP Piyal Nishantha de Silva appeared on a live show on Swarnavahini TV claiming that 11 soldiers were killed at Sainthamaruthu and that he was saying so with full responsibility. The military refuted it strongly. Thereafter the MP was to be questioned by the Police and possibly penalized under emergency laws for spreading false information. Upon close examination of the photo that went viral, it became clear that it was taken from a different attack which took place in Pakistan.

Session 7: Countering hate speech and fake news

Privacy is limited on the internet, so we must take precautions to protect ourselves online. It is important to be careful and vigilant about the information we share online. For example, if you post that no one is at your home, someone may take that data and use it by going to your home and taking things while no one is there.

Report a post: Choose a post on their Facebook timeline, then click the drop-down menu in the right-hand corner of the post and select “Find support or report post.” A menu of reasons to report will appear. Go through every reason listed and select one.

Blocking: On the extended menu on someone’s Facebook profile, there should be a “block” option. The facilitator will explain that to click that button, the person you are blocking cannot contact you through Facebook, you will not see any of their posts, and vice versa.

Unfriend: On the main menu, there is also the “friends” icon. We can press this to “unfriend” someone which allows them to still contact you, but you may not be notified, and they will be limited to the things they can see on your timeline, and vice versa.

Understanding Facebook privacy settings

Being aware of the different privacy setting available to us on social media can help us maintain privacy on the internet. Here is a list of privacy options available on Facebook.
Unfollow: To unfollow someone, it is the same process as unfriending someone. The “follow” button is on the main menu, and when pressed, it allows you to “unfollow” someone, which limits the amount of their content you may see on your timeline, but they are still able to contact you and vice versa.

Restrict: Finally, to put someone on the restricted list, you again choose the “friends” icon underneath their profile picture, choose “edit friends list” and then “restricted.” The restricted option allows you to remain friends with someone but limit and control the content they are able to see.

People can easily hack into your Facebook by leaving yourself logged in, so be sure to use multifactor authentication when possible.

People can also hack others through Wi-Fi and to always use a secure, private connection.

You can also choose to put a sticker over the camera on your devices to ensure images are not being taken outside of camera mode.

Session 8: Understanding your audience

Your audience can be categorised by things like:

- Gender
- Education
- Marital Status
- Age
- Location
- Insight
- Trends
- Mood

However, it is also important to note that people could lie about their demographics. For example, many people lie about their marital status. Many may say they are single, when they are married. Or, they may lie about their education level or where they live. Therefore, when creating content, it can be beneficial to come up with something that appeals to more than one demographic in order to expand the potential to gain a larger audience.
It is also useful to understand what kind of content is most compatible for your audience, which means will text, video, audio, images, etc. For example, an audience with a high level of education may be more likely to read a long text, while a very young audience may be more drawn to short videos and images.

Session 9: Digital storytelling: creating video-based content

The final session of the workshop focuses on the basics of photo editing software, the elements of good and viral content, and overall content creation.

Principles of content creation

- Some general principles of content creation include:
  - Content should be short and sweet
  - Content quality should be about 2000px*2000px
  - Content should be easy to understand
  - Attractive • Suitable/appropriate
  - Use polite and friendly language
  - Maintain copyright attributes
  - Follow social media community standards (nudity, gore, etc.)
  - Content should be factually accurate

How to use Photopea

1. Open a new project in Photopea.
2. Set the pixel/size to 2000x2000
3. Go to Google and search “Rage Face” and copy the image
4. Paste the image into the new Photopea project, then enlarge and centre the image.
5. Come up with a clever saying to go with the image
6. Once the quote is chosen, use fonts.org to select a font for the quote and insert it into the project
7. Export the image as JPG.

Online editing tools

There are several online photo and video editing tools. Photopea and Filmora are two editing tools that are free, easily accessible and provide good editing options.
Developing good social media content

As a content creator it is important to know the qualities of good social media content.

- Social Currency: people care about how they look to others
- Triggers: content that is at the top of mind/tip of tongue
- Emotional: creating content that we care about. When we care, we share
- Practical: useful content gets shared
- Public: visible content
- Stories: the content is from life experience

Developing Viral Social Media Content

The qualities of good viral content include:

- Viral content is good content (it also follows the above guidelines)
- Avoid identical content
- Quizzes
- Conversation starters
- Response
- Video content
- Visual

Sources of Content Creation

Content can be created on the field or from the desk.

**On the field:** content on the field include videos from political events, sporting events, or coverage or any live incident taking place.

**From the desk:** this includes original content created from stock photos, videos, audio, etc., and media you have created yourself.
Team building is an important part of the Cyber Guardians Boot Camp. While there are various team building exercises available, the following are recommended for this workshop.

### Step into the circle

**Time Needed:**
20 minutes

**Session objectives:**
- Participants will recognize things they have in common
- Participants will build trust by sharing things about themselves

**Key messages:**
It is important to acknowledge our similarities and respect our differences

**Material needed:**
- List of questions/qualities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Module Name</th>
<th>Content and Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Set Up</td>
<td>The facilitator will instruct participants to get into a circle.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Once they are in the correct place, the facilitator will explain the instructions of the game:</td>
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<td>The facilitator will tell participants to step into the circle if they have the mentioned qualities. (The facilitator should make a list of qualities for the group of participants before the activity. They can vary, but the most important thing is that the questions/qualities are relevant to the group doing the activity. Some examples are in the next module.) Participants will remain inside the circle until the facilitator asks them to step back into the original circle with the rest of the group. This will continue until the end of the list.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>During this module, the facilitator will go through the list of qualities beginning with light, causal things such as:</td>
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<td>&quot;Step into the circle if you use social media...&quot; and move to heavier, more serious qualities such as, &quot;step into the circle if someone you know has experienced violence...&quot; etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 mins</td>
<td>Debrief</td>
<td>Once the facilitator has gone through the list, he/she will ask the group about what they thought of the activity, how it made them feel, what they noticed and what surprise them/did not surprise them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Balloon Game

**Time Needed:**
20 minutes

**Session objectives:**
- Participants will understand that the balloon is a metaphor for themselves and that the toothpick is the potential to do harm.
- Participants will realize that it is more important to focus on what we can do for good rather than the harm we can cause.

**Key messages:**
- You can protect yourself without hurting others.
- Do not be distracted from a goal by things that are not important.
- More people succeed when we all work toward a common goal.

**Material needed:**
- Balloons
- Toothpicks

### | Time | Module Name     | Content and Methods                                                                                                                                 |
---|------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 min | **Protect your balloon** | The facilitator will give each participant a balloon and a toothpick. Participants will all blow up their balloon. The facilitator will explain to the participants that their objective is to keep their balloon intact, and the last person to have their balloon is the winner. Predictably, participants will take the objective to mean that they should protect their balloon by also popping others with their toothpicks. The participants will continue to pop their balloons until the facilitator stops them. |
| 5 min | **Reflection 1** | The facilitator will stop the participants and bring them back into the circle. He/she will ask the participants what happened during that activity. The participants will likely reply that they popped each other’s balloons in order to keep theirs safe, but also even when their balloon was already popped. |
| 5 mins | **Try again** | The facilitator will give the participants another balloon if they have lost theirs, and they will again blow them up. Once everyone is ready, the facilitator will ask them to try again with the same instructions. Ideally this time, participants will not use their toothpicks to pop each other’s balloons but find creative ways to protect their own. |
| 5 mins | **Reflection 2** | After a few minutes, bring the participants back to the circle for another reflection and ask them again what happened this time. Participants should answer that more balloons were kept safe because they were not attacking others. Explain to the participants that he/she never instructed them to pop each other’s balloons, only to keep their own safe. He/she will explain that because they also had a toothpick, they assumed that they should also attack other balloons when the toothpick is only a distraction from the actual goal of protecting their own balloon. When we are focused on one goal, it is easy to ignore distractions such as the toothpick, and that when we all have a common goal, more are likely to succeed. |
Spaghetti Tower

Time Needed:
30 minutes

Session objectives:
• Participants will work as a team to build a tower out of spaghetti.
• Participants will experience what it is like to work as a team, and in turn build trust.

Key messages:
Being able to work as a team is important in not only small tasks like a spaghetti tower, but in all aspects of life.

Material needed:
• Dry Spaghetti
• Masking Tape
• Marshmallows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Module Name</th>
<th>Content and Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Instructions</td>
<td>The facilitator will group the participants into five or six teams and then explain to the teams that they are to use dry spaghetti and tape to build the tallest tower they possibly can, and then put the marshmallow on top. The team with the tallest tower is the winner. Next, the facilitator will pass out the materials to each team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>Building</td>
<td>Once everyone has their materials, the facilitator may prompt the groups to begin building their tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 mins</td>
<td>Winners</td>
<td>After the 20 minutes is up, the facilitator will stop the groups and declare the winner.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Part 2:
What is ‘National Champions’?

The National Champions programme provides capacity development for youth with substantial social media following. The programme encourages youth to combat hate speech on social media and create positive social media content that promotes pluralism and peaceful messaging.

A group of 20 youth were selected to become National Champions under the Cyber Guardians programme. Up to now they have been offered technical support on content creation, cyber security, and digital marketing by experts in the field. The National Champions then use their social media platforms to promote positive messages that are unique to their online identities. They are also provided the tools and resources necessary to combat hate speech and fake news online.

Who are the National Champions?
The National Champions consist of youth with significant social media presence in Sri Lanka. They are all either Admins of popular Facebook pages, highly vocal through their personal Facebook accounts, or are YouTube content creators. The gender composition of the group included seventeen boys and three girls. Fourteen of them were Sinhala speaking and six were Tamil speaking. The social media content they generate is predominantly in either Sinhala or Tamil.

Why this group?

The National Champions group was formed to counteract hate speech and fake news online. As a group, the 20 National Champions have a social media following of 5 million users. Given their enormous reach, providing them with the right tools and skills to counteract hate speech and create positive online content is of vital importance.

Bringing a group from mixed backgrounds together also provided the opportunity for Sinhala and Tamil social media influencers to come together and interact face to face rather than behind a screen. While the social media content they create is diverse and varied, countering hate speech became a common goal that brough the group together. Ultimately, they each act as Champions for peacebuilding in the country.
The communication between this group was organic in nature due to series of unexpected circumstances. The group were initially contacted and introduced to each other online, through WhatsApp, in the beginning of April 2019. They were invited to take part in a workshop on privacy and cyber security. This was meant to be their first face to face meeting; however, the workshop was postponed due to the Easter Sunday attacks that took place in April 2019.

Due to the situation in the country, it took some time to reschedule the workshop.

During that time, the group continued to keep in touch with each other and discuss issues and share experiences. In that process they also realised that hate speech was a common issue that they all wanted to counteract. Before the first workshop was rescheduled, the group took their own initiative and started working together to counter hate speech with no external intervention from the programme organisers. When the group finally met face to face, they had already formed a close connection naturally.

### National Champions Learning Platforms

The National Champions Learning Platforms provides a space for the group to come together to learn, network, share their ongoing work and discuss the challenges they face in while producing their content. Session under the learning platform our spread out across the programme calendar and often decided based on needs of the group.

### Venue

The needs of the venue might change depending on the type of session held but it is important to remember that as the group consists only of 20 participants and they are already comfortable with each other, a smaller, a more intimate space will be more suited for sessions than large meeting rooms. This will allow the group to interact freely with each other.

### Planning a session

Planning learning initiatives for the National Champions depends on the needs of the group and therefore can’t be pre-planned well in advance.

### Technical requirements

This again depends on the session but there are a few items that will always be required.

- Laptops; ideally one per participant (participants can be asked to bring their own laptops)
- Wi-Fi connection with enough bandwidth
- Projector for presentations
Session 1: Cyber Security and Search Engine Optimisation

This session covered a range of topics related to cyber security and search engine optimisation.

Basic SEO Topic Areas:
- Identifying the Audience
- Keyword Research
- User Intent
- Analytics and Reporting
- Mobile SEO
- Crawling
- Indexing
- Content
- SEO and Social Media

Basic Cyber Security Topic Areas:
- Introduction to Cyber Security
- Common cyber-attacks and how to avoid them
- Ethical Hacking
- How to protect privacy in cyber space

Session 2: Facebook Networking Event

In this session, the National Champions had the opportunity to discuss Facebook’s policy on hate speech, privacy and cyber security directly with the Facebook Sri Lanka team. The group were also introduced to local partners who fact-check online content. This meant that once they have identified a post as fake news, they can report to a local partner who can escalate the process of removing that post from the web.

Financial support
Up to this point, the champions were working and creating content without any financial assistance. Following session two, the champions were asked to put up 8 posts per month in relation to the areas of work that Search for Common Ground engages in. In addition, they were given an allowance of $100 per month to help with boosting their online platforms.

Session 3: Digital marketing strategy

The third session provided the champions an opportunity to learn about digital marketing strategies from an expert in the field. They gained tools on how to target posts to their audience.

Reflections and future work
Session three concluded with a reflective exercise where participants reflected on their work in the past seven months and discussed their ideas for the future. The champions were given the freedom to formulate their own ideas with some minor input from the organisers on finetuning these ideas.

Upcoming sessions
Following session three, the group realised the importance of the session to their work and requested further training on digital marketing strategies. Further training on digital storytelling and countering hate speech are also scheduled to be provided to the group.

The Learning Platforms also intend to include sessions on peacebuilding and ethics at a later point when participants are more comfortable with each other and have developed a deeper level of trust.
There were several factors, planned and unplanned, that contributed to the success of the National Champions programme.

Although it was not planned, the time and space given to the group to bond through their own initiative was a key factor in the success of the programme. This meant that when coming into the sessions, the group were already comfortable with each other. Given the sensitive nature of some of the content discussed in the sessions this level of comfort was necessary.

Despite coming from different backgrounds and having varied interests both online and offline, having a common goal to work towards helped keep the group active and engaged. Most often this happened even without the intervention of the programme organisers.

Throughout the programme participants had autonomy to generate their own content, choose sessions that are helpful to them, and voice their views openly. It was important that the programme did not take a top down approach or treat the group as a group that needed to be “taught”.

Organic bond between group members

Having a common goal

Giving participants autonomy
What worked well?

Letting them stay true to their audience base and content generation

Champions were also asked to stay true to the content they were already creating prior to taking part in the programme. Their following was based on their existing content and it was important that they continue to create content that was authentic.

Financial incentive

The financial incentive of $100 per month, however small, helped keep the group engaged and constantly producing relevant content.

Messages of peace building and reconciliation built-in rather than preached

While peacebuilding was at the heart of this programme, there was no attempt to preach concepts of peacebuilding. Instead the theme of peacebuilding was built-in to sessions which promoted being socially conscious and sensitive to social divisions in the country.
Cyber Guardians
Useful Resources

- Prezi for integrated presentation making
- Openshot for open source video-based content generation software
- Photopia for online free image-based content generation
- Mentimeter.com for participatory word clouds/reflections/feedback
- Google forms for call for applications and feedback forms
- Web.whatsapp.com for projecting content shared on the Boot Camp WhatsApp group
- WeTransfer for sharing material within the group
- Netflix for movies with subs
- Unsplash for open source images
- Besound for open source audio

EMPOWERING YOUTH TO POSITIVELY TRANSFORM SOCIAL MEDIA IN SRI LANKA