

Media Ethics: Social Media for Peace

*Paper prepared for the Global Ethics Forum 2011-2012 by Lilian Ndangam and Philip Lee
World Association for Christian Communication (WACC)*

www.waccglobal.org

Introduction

Communication rights aim to overcome the invisibility in the public sphere of poor, marginalized and excluded people, their opinions, concerns and interests, and to counter media representations that hinder the inclusion and participation of marginalized communities in relation to issues of citizenship, governance, and sustainable development.

There is considerable evidence that addressing “communication poverty” and providing access to affordable communications can help raise the voices of marginalized groups in order to influence decision-makers, share knowledge and enable participation.¹ However, communication rights – which include freedom of expression and opinion and freedom of information – have come under threat from governments and corporate commercial interests that seek to restrict or control the mass media of communication as well as the infrastructure on which today’s digital communications depend.

In February 2010, the four special rapporteurs on freedom of expression appointed by the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe jointly identified 10 key challenges to freedom of expression in the next decade. Discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to freedom of expression is one of them. They said, “...historically disadvantaged groups... continue to struggle to have their voices heard and to access information of relevance to them.”²

The four rapporteurs are particularly concerned about:

- obstacles to the establishment of media by and for historically disadvantaged groups;
- factors preventing historically disadvantaged groups from engaging in legitimate debate about their problems and concerns;
- lack of self-regulatory measures to address inadequate coverage by the media of issues of relevance to historically disadvantaged groups;
- the prevalence of stereotypical or derogatory information about historically disadvantaged groups.

Recognizing and claiming communication rights can strengthen people’s capacity to achieve development goals. Yet social, economic and legal inequalities restrict many vulnerable, marginalized, and disadvantaged communities and groups who experience disparities in freedom of expression, in accessing and sharing information and knowledge, in making their opinions and needs known to the wider society, in helping to shape public agendas in their countries, and in responding to their life circumstances.

¹ *Voices of the Poor. Crying Out for Change* (2000). Oxford University Press and the World Bank.

² La Rue, F., M. Haraszti, C. Botero and F. Tlakula (2010) “Tenth Anniversary Joint Declaration: Ten Key Challenges to Freedom of Expression in the Next Decade”.

www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/14session/A.HRC.14.23.Add.2_en.pdf (accessed June 2012)

Social media are the latest in a series of technologies whose availability, accessibility, and affordability might be the key to creating a more just society.

Social media and digital technology

“The broader question, then, is: to study how and under what constraints, and with what assistance (or otherwise) from new media resources, are people now constructing a sense of connections to wider public spaces, spaces of potential politics and citizenship – or not? Do new media, any more than old, improve our chances of constructing a public space in which we can address each other as effective equals?”

Nick Couldry³

Each new medium of communication changes society. From printing to broadcasting to digital technologies, the mass media of communication have had successively greater impact on people’s lives, their ways of thinking and of viewing the world. As a consequence, throughout history what became known as the mass media have often been constrained by government, corporate and religious interests – raising crucial questions of ownership, control and censorship. Such constraints inevitably led to the creation of alternative media – more accessible, less restrictive spaces in which citizens can express their own opinions and agendas. Today’s communication scene is no different. Once again, the new media of communication are providing alternatives that have the potential to empower ordinary people – but on a scale and at a speed and with a connectivity unimaginable in the past.

Digital technologies and social networks facilitated by access both to the Internet, to mobile telephony and to satellites have enabled many people around the world to establish virtual networks and online communities. Social media are a key dimension of the way computers and digital technologies are revolutionizing how people create, store, transmit and consume information and knowledge. Such a transformation raises profound questions about the way we communicate, about human identity and continuity:

“In the digital culture that is being established in front of our eyes, a new form of reading is emerging: gleaning, clicking, zapping, skimming; it is both visual and tabular and does not involve a meditative attitude; rather it focuses on finding answers to questions and rapidly renewing objects on the screen. Above all, by making it possible to combine writing, image, sound, and video, the new computer technologies are undermining the dominant position of language, stripping it of the aura with which it has been invested since ancient times when it was used to magically address the world, to express a relationship to reality, and to hold the tribe under its charm.”⁴

Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein have identified six different types of social media: collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (e.g. Twitter), content communities

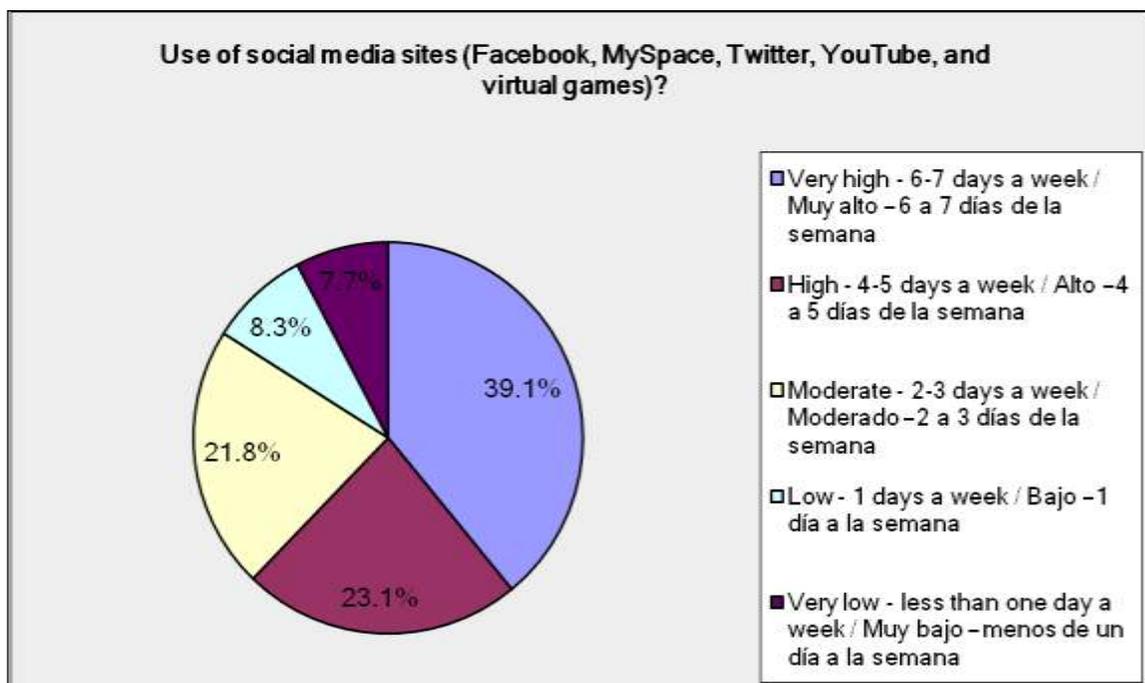
³ Nick Couldry (2002). “The Forgotten Digital Divide: Researching Social Exclusion/Inclusion in the Age of Personalised Media.” Paper presented to the Media in Transition: Globalisation and Convergence conference, MIT, 10-12 May 2002.

⁴ *From Papyrus to Hypertext: Toward the Universal Digital Library*, by Christian Vandendorpe. University of Illinois Press (2009), pp. 165-6.

(e.g. Youtube), social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft), and virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life).⁵

These new media and ways of networking have important implications for society, culture, and politics. Besides offering alternative means of consuming news, information and entertainment, social media sites present opportunities for establishing and building virtual networks both within countries and across national borders. David Faris points to three distinguishing factors that make emerging social media unique: their ability to share and spread information through an individual's trust-based network, the flexibility offered by multiple options for accessing (i.e. by mobile telephony or through computers, laptops and tablets), and their accessibility and functionality for many people with basic computer literacy skills⁶.

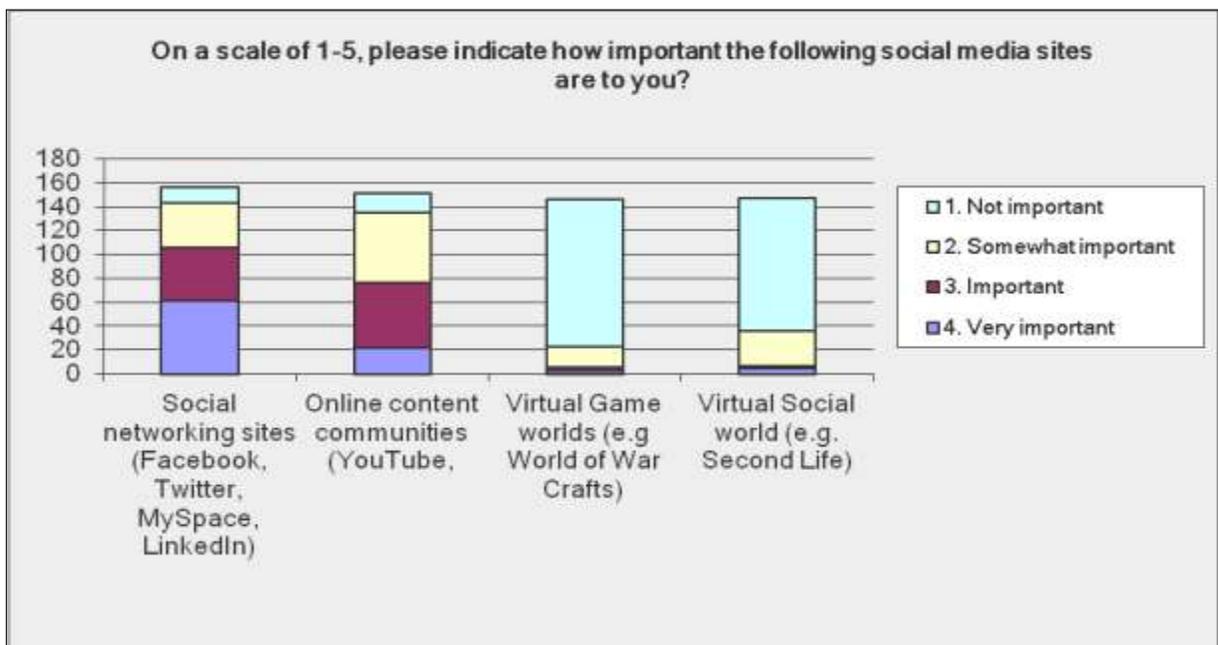
Reliance on trust-based social networks underscores the extent to which social media are rooted in and sustained by a physical community and the existing relationships within this. The distinguishing characteristics identified by Faris partially account for the popularity of social networking sites and content-sharing communities online. In a 2012 survey of 156 members of the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) around the world, 62% of respondents indicated using social media sites between 4 and 7 days a week:



The survey also revealed heavy reliance on social networking sites and online content:

⁵ Kaplan, Andreas M.; Michael Haenlein (2010). "Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media." *Business Horizons* 53 (1): 59–68.

⁶ David Faris. "We Are All Revolutionaries Now: Social Media Networks and the Egyptian Revolution. Social Media Revolutions: All Hype or New Reality?" Liechtenstein Institute for Self-Determination, Princeton University, 2011: 14, http://www.princeton.edu/lisd/publications/socialmedia_2011.pdf



The high levels of interaction offered by social media have also provided social entrepreneurs and activists with extensive resources and opportunities that in the past were less easily accessible or non-existent. The networked capacity of social media has been significant in empowering both individuals and communities, and in driving collective action – as was evident in the Arab Spring of 2011. Such examples prompt further reflection on the role of social media in promoting social transformation and a culture of peace. Respondents to the survey broadly acknowledge the potential for social media to facilitate dialogue, to promote the ready exchange of information and ideas, and to mobilize collective action. In particular, although with reservations, they highlighted innovative applications of social media used to promote peace and social justice in their country:

- “Social media have embraced peace awareness campaigns which have impacted greatly in reconciling Kenyans after the post-election violence on 2007/08.”
- “In Taiwan, social media has been effective in rallying help for relief efforts after Typhoon Morakot. So, I would think that promotion of peace via social media is also possible.”
- “Beyond promoting peace in Peru social networks are very active in defending social, environmental and political Rights, freedom of expression and the press, and to denounce abuses.”
- “It can allow access to information not included in corporate media. I use it to share peace journalism media I create.”

However, other respondents emphasized the need to combine the use of social media with traditional means of engagement:

“Social media are very important in Brazil, especially because this is a powerful space to share information about NGOs, protests, social movements that traditional media do not show or support. Despite this I am not sure about its real potential. I realize that this space is very important as a new possibility to broadcast information and strengthening the networks in the continental country. But considering that the links in social media are due to personal

and individual interests, the information probably does not reach groups without interest in social and political issues. So, I think there are a potential to connect people and strengthen causes, but it is only one more way to do this; not the only one.”

In the case of the Arab Spring, social media and mobile communications played a significant role in transforming virtual ideas into public action. The images of Mohamed Bouazizi – the street vendor whose self-immolation sparked the riots – quickly spread online through networks of family and friends. Western mass media were also quick to pick up stories and images spread via digital technologies to bolster and/or illustrate their own reporting. However, a note of caution as to the unconfirmed veracity of the information was nearly always introduced, which raises ethical questions of authenticity, reliability and journalistic objectivity. Many commentators point to the fact that social media do not operate in a vacuum, that many authoritarian regimes display an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the Internet and digital technologies, and that many so-called revolutions (not least those in the Middle East) were the product of years of patient activism.

In an insightful article published online in the Al Jadid Review, Michael Teague contends that:

“The honeymoon period during which geriatric and calcified regimes were dumbfounded by a new, modern threat is certainly finished, and the counterrevolution is well underway. The internet has been instrumental in nourishing the connective tissues that bond activists and the citizenry in general, and has even had more immediate, practical applications. Indeed, in a short span of time, online communications have helped Arabs to redeem the multiple failures of the heady pan-Arab and Arab nationalist dreams of the 50’s and 60’s. If the movements that are unfolding today at such an unpredictable pace are to be successful, however, much more sacrifice still needs to be made. That means, first and foremost, the sacrifice of unreasonable illusions about what is possible and what is not.”⁷

In the Pacific, and in the specific content of debates around gender equality, questions have been raised about the efficacy of new information and communication technologies at the grassroots level. Local research has reiterated the effectiveness of traditional media (face-to-face communication and local initiatives) and questioned their apparent displacement by new media. In her report (see Appendix 1), Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls identifies one of the aspects of the digital divide: that rural women have least access to digital platforms partly due to low levels of technological literacy, partly due to the high costs of new technologies, but also due to a lack of infrastructure such as electricity and networks. According to her:

“The challenge for feminist media networks like FemLINKPACIFIC is not only to ensure that women we work with are reflected in a range of media content particularly as decision-makers able to claim and define their peace, human rights and human security. We also need to ensure that social media content particularly civil society campaigns ensure equitable space for women as well – in all our diversities.”

Latin American society, with 43% of its population already connected to the Internet in South America and 27.5% in Central America and with extensive use of cell phones, recognizes that connectivity and participation in cyberspace are important dimensions of life today and in the future. For young people, the socialization and meaning given to the web are intrinsic to the

⁷ “New Media and the Arab Spring”, by Michael Teague (2012). <http://www.aljadid.com/content/new-media-and-arab-spring>

construction of their identity. For many adults, presence and active participation in cyberspace underlies their work identity and also their social identity. Such is today's convergence of digital technologies in the home and workplace that Latin Americans seem to see little point in separating the two and no point at all in legislating for two different "worlds". Commentators observe that what is wrong in one is equally wrong in the other and everyone should be expected to be law abiding. The particular example of gender discrimination is given, in which virtual gender violence should be seen by the authorities to have equal weight with actual gender violence in real life.

However, the report of Dafne Sabanes Plou (see Appendix 2) says that there is still a long way to go before any kind of parity in accessibility and affordability is achieved. She observes that:

"The information society is in full swing and is extended day by day in the region. It will be important for governments to carry out their plans for universal access for their people, also in broadband, and educational plans that will allow participation in the web to be an option for everyone, at affordable prices and with stable networks and rules of participation that respect freedom of expression, of association and active participation in the development of Internet content."

New media and new media tools have created spaces for more people than at any time previously in history to become engaged with the important issues of our time. They have made a significant and enduring difference to the way people organize for social and political activism, created economic opportunities for those in the developing and developed world, facilitated disaster response, linked networks across national divides, and shared previously inaccessible information and knowledge – such as alternative ways of understanding issues of conflict. Social media tools in particular have allowed people to be producers of content and to participate in dialogue that spans the globe in real time. Such changes are part and parcel of today's global scene and are only "revolutionary" when viewed in the context of history.

Theoretically, new media tools can facilitate better communication between parties in conflict and help resolve it before an outbreak of violence. Yet, as a recent report comments:

"With new media, the individuals who use them can drive the tools' influence. These new tools can be used to propagate conflict or peace. Those using new media also need to consider the consequences of their activities and their own responsibility to be honest, fair, and accurate; to check their facts; not to distort information; to question the motives of their sources; and to avoid creating stereotypes. Critical thinking now, especially by the digital natives, about how to harness the power and potential of new media to manage conflict and build peace is one essential step in making sure that society does not miss this opportunity to contribute to peace."⁸

Here the onus appears to be less on regulatory mechanisms (codes of practice, media observatories, ombudspersons, etc.) than on civil society seizing the opportunity to make use of digital technologies and social media to construct a better world. However, what might be seen as an ethical imperative to bring about inclusive communication – especially in regard to peace-building – is easier said than done. The right to communicate is by no means universally acknowledged, let alone formally recognized in the legislative frameworks of individual

⁸ *The Impact of New Media on Peacebuilding*. Study Guide published by the Endowment of the United States Institute of Peace (2011).

countries. And with regard to digital technologies, as Katherine Reilly notes, Latin American governments are fighting shy of regulatory reform:

“Media reforms in the region studiously avoid regulating the Internet as a form of mediation. Blogging, tweeting and social media are exempt from consideration under the new media laws being passed throughout the region – which is not unexpected given the challenges and implications of monitoring social media. But the commercial aspects of internet, including issues related to intellectual property rights, distributed or “peer” software production, cloud computing, and the like are also excluded from current discussions.”⁹

Even so, digital technology and social media offer increased potential for wider and more sustained public participation in democratic governance, good citizenship, and in decision-making around the crucial questions of our times. One emerging concern seeks to address the place and relevance of regulatory mechanisms in the context of civil society organizations and citizen journalists pursuing agendas that are significantly different from the mainstream media. In this respect, quite a number of organizations (such as the Poynter Institute and the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism) are beginning to seek common ground and shared codes of practice. One example of the latter is that of the Radio Television Digital News Association (see Appendix 4).

The democratic potential of equal access to communication (especially via today’s digital technologies) was recently endorsed by a group of communicators meeting in Busan, Korea, to prepare a statement on communication for the World Council of Churches’ 10th Assembly in 2013. The Busan Communication Statement “Reclaiming communication for life, justice and peace” notes that:

“Communication can sow understanding or misunderstanding, harmony or discord. Those who challenge injustice use communication to empower. Those who deny justice use communication to disempower. Communicators for peace seek to create images and tell stories that respect the values and traditions that lie at the heart of other people’s lives. Such images and stories can strengthen inter-cultural and inter-religious understanding, challenge stereotypes, and promote societies that are able to live together in peace, affirming what they hold in common as well as what separates them.”

Despite a few negative comments and impressions, many who responded to the WACC survey believe that social media have an important role to play in peace-building. But no one suggests that social media alone can do the job. “They can set an issue in the agenda, but not more than that. Peace must be built on action basis, not the Internet.” However, there is general consensus that social media constitute “a valid field of dialogue, exchanging thoughts, exchanging opinions and promoting ideas and can contribute to re-affirming shared values of tolerance, peaceful coexistence, equal value of all people, equal opportunities.”

In this respect, “social media provide the platform where voices from different corners can be heard and a powerful space to share information about NGOs, protests, social movements that traditional media do not show or support.” They facilitate exchange of information and views, and are a quick way to distribute information and an interactive way of developing ideas and plans, especially as an organizing tool for grassroots movements of excluded social groups. As

⁹ “Is media reform enough in Latin America’s post-liberal economies?”, by Katherine Reilly. In *Media Development* 3/2012.

a form of “citizen-based conversation”, social media are easily adapted to defending social, environmental and political rights, freedom of expression and the press, and to denouncing abuses. They become tools for people’s mobilization and demonstration (both virtually and on the streets) and are especially effective in relief efforts.

In addition, social media can be used “to create awareness about cultural differences and similarities and acceptance of these differences and knowing the commonalities that lead to respecting individual choices and rights that may eventually usher in peace.” They offer opportunities to explore the unknown and to reduce the fear of difference by enabling people from diverse backgrounds to connect and share their ideas. Yet, how credible are they and on what basis can they create trust?

Ethical challenges

Regardless of the potential and opportunities posed by the new media for social transformation and peace, issues of trust and privacy remain of vital concern to many civil society organizations and individuals as they engage with social media. Respondents to the WACC survey highlight a few such ethical challenges:

“Lack of verification and attribution of information, taking photos or quotes out of context, posting graphic content. How much information is too much? What self-disclosure should be encouraged/discouraged, especially for minors? How can socially responsible or redemptive content get higher ratings and/or more promotion than videos with irresponsible or detrimental content--and how do you democratize the rating process and promote values such as tolerance rather than sensationalism?”

“Facebook is being actively used to monitor people that police and intelligence authorities believe are involved in criminal and political activities. Individual users can also violate the privacy of others by revealing their activities without their consent.”

“There is not much discussion of the theme at the level of public opinion, but groups specializing in communication rights have pointed to problems of security and privacy, as also data retention for commercial purposes, which can be a serious problem for maintaining confidentiality in communications and could lead to the violation of fundamental communication rights. But people in general don’t have much information on the theme. In this sense, the media ought to take a more critical attitude and open up the debate.”

In addition to concerns about the authenticity of information circulated on social media and the potential misuse of personal information on social media sites, censorship is a significant concern. As Philip Howard and Muzzamil Hussain point out, the use of pseudonyms on social media by opposition parties facing harassment in authoritarian countries violates user agreements created by social media sites such as Facebook¹⁰. Civil society activists and citizen journalists operating in authoritarian regimes face similar problems using pseudonyms on social media sites. Some social media sites also face pressure from some governments to censor information and limit access to their sites and other information on the Internet¹¹. In response to such pressures and concerns from users, the Global Network Initiative was set up to provide a

¹⁰ Philip Howard and Muzzamil Hussain (2011) “The Upheavals in Egypt and Tunisia: The Role of Digital Media.” *Journal of Democracy* 22 (3) : 35 -48

¹¹ In January 2012, Twitter refined its technology to censor messages on a country-by-country basis and announced plans the share removal requests it receives from governments, companies and individuals.

framework for ICT companies and other stakeholders. The initiative provides a framework for protecting and advancing freedom of expression and privacy globally.

Concerns about censorship, privacy and social responsibility regarding access to and use of social media point to a need to interrogate the potential of social media further. Some of the questions to be addressed might include:

1. What roles could social media realistically and credibly play in strengthening democratic accountability, good governance and good citizenship?
2. What roles could social media realistically and credibly play in conflict-resolution and/or peace-building?
3. How can social media be a credible and reliable source of information and opinion in the context of the practice of global and national journalism?
4. What steps need to be taken to guarantee a sound working relationship between so-called professional journalists and citizen journalists that respect commonly accepted deontological codes of practice?
5. To what uses can those working on peace-building and conflict-resolution put social media to enhance and promote their cause in ways that achieve sustainable peace?
6. If social media become the norm for day-to-day communication, to a large extent replacing mainstream media, what consequences can we predict?

In the immediate future, it will be necessary to provide education and guidelines with regard to accountability, social media literacy and ethics; to offer adequate resources for social media practitioners including resources in multiple languages; and to explore better articulation of the relationship between journalists and civil society, especially in the context of social transformation and peace-building.

PACIFIC: Women's access to social media networks in Rural Fiji

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls, femLINKpacific

While millions of people around the globe, through social networking (internal, external, or mobile), are building online local, regional, and global communities to communicate their shared interests and activities, disseminate information, and interact through a variety of web-based tools, what are the implications for rural women in the Pacific Island region?

Only 3 out of the 20 rural women leaders I am meeting with this week in a rural centre of Fiji, 30 minutes by road from the capital city have regular access to the internet. At FemLINKPACIFIC's community media centre in Suva, young women from our Generation Next project in Suva have regular access to the internet through their work (one of the reasons we have a Facebook page) but for most of the women and young women who our organisation works with in 4 rural centres in Fiji, internet access is only possible from local cafes which may or may not be a safe distance from their home. For many who live outside of the electricity grid often this means 25 kilometres of travel from their home. Mobile phone technology, however, makes it possible for rural women to receive information from a central location. The challenge remains being able to afford credit to be able to reply or pass the message on.

It is clear that despite the use of the term "global village" in relation to the internet, Pacific realities, especially Pacific women's realities when addressing information and communication have remained marginalized for too long. According to the Regional review of PICT¹² progress on the Beijing Platform for Action – October 2009-January 2010:

"The explosion in ICT in every PICT, and the global connections it permits, are opening up new opportunities for some Pacific women and girls. However, only a small minority of Pacific women have access to ICT and to global markets. (While) Some women are starting to use ICT to explore educational, economic and development opportunities. For example, Samoa's Women in Business Development Inc. markets fine mats, handicrafts and virgin coconut oil products globally through website sales and orders. Other examples include Samoa's Fesootai network of community-based tele-centres (11 of which are managed and operated by women's committees); Niue's Learning Centres, which introduce women to ICT and the various functions they might use; the Pacific Graduate Women's Net (PGWnet); and the Small Islands Communities online discussions (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – UNESCO). Women in the public service also connect via the Pacific Village Online project, which links all the public services in the region with a database of national codes of conduct. The Pacific Rural Internet Connectivity System (PacRICS) recently extended its free Internet connection at 40 public good sites for another 12 months. This free service includes the upgrade of modems and transmitters."

Obstacles encountered according to the report include policy and ethical issues, in particular the general lack of gender policies and guidelines within the media sector:

¹² PICT: Pacific Island Countries and Territories include; Australia, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Pitcairn, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis & Futuna.

- There is an absence of national and regional mechanisms for standard-setting in media and communications (electronic, print, visual and audio). This gap contributes to the continuing portrayal of negative and degrading stereotypes of women in the media. There is also untrammelled entry of international programmes, many of which present stereotypical and negative pictures of women's experiences, and foreign advertisements promoting consumerism.
- Overall there is a serious lack of gender policies being adopted and applied within media and ICT initiatives both at national and regional levels. For example, the regional PacRICS project implementation plan has no gender-related indicators.
- Access to ICT is not evenly spread. There is a danger that rural women especially are becoming further marginalized in the new 'digital divide' due partly to affordability but also to the lack of infrastructure to provide services to rural areas. Similarly, projects to provide computers in schools favour those living in urban areas.
- Women's electronic networks have an immense potential for change. Among possible models for others to emulate are the Women Peace and Human Security network, which has succeeded in gaining a place for women's groups and civil society groups in FRSC Track II discussions, and the FWCC anti-domestic violence network, which has built up a strong and informed cadre of female and male advocates in most PICTs.

From 2004 to 2007, FemLINKPACIFIC participated in the People's Communication for Development (PC4D) research which helped validate that there is almost nothing about women in relation to technology, especially in the context of the Pacific, where in recent years, there has been a development of the Pacific Digital Strategy. What this also means is that decisions are being made about the ICT sector, but without substantive gender analysis. What was of particular concern was that those working in the research field do not seem to be interested, or are not working with grassroots women, and are not connecting it with communication, or with technology.

Underlying these issues is the need to give due consideration to infrastructure issues when planning developments relating to new information and communication technologies (ICTs), ensuring that communities are able to contribute to local content development and production.

The review of related literature indeed revealed that Pacific women or even the gendered aspects of ICTs are not being included in current research on communications particularly those dealing with ICTs.

Whatever research on new ICTs was available tended to be limited to the kinds of jobs that are being generated by technology. They focused on how many computers there are per capita or how many people use the internet. However nothing is heard about communities or non-government organizations or grassroots people's organizations and their use of technology. These were also silent on television and newspapers or the other modes of communicating as though everything else has stopped.

So while the global point of view highlights that new ICTs seemed to be the priority area, PC4D fleshed out the applicability of these new ICTs to grassroots women. This is critical because so much emphasis in our region has been given to debating internet connectivity and the establishment of computer access points.

Too often these strategies fail to ask the question: "Do these communities want these new ICTs? Do they want to use the computer or the internet? What is effective on the ground?" The

Pacific perspective of the research has reiterated the effectiveness of what is often called traditional tools and yet people only talk about new ICTs today.

So the research helped draw together what community and women's media advocates have been saying for a long time, that ICT development should not just be focused on the technology-determined kind of development but that ICT needs to be more people-centered. For as people, we are all still communicating the way people have been communicating, years, decades, centuries ago – that is talking directly to each other through radio, theatre, street plays, conversations and that is what works!

Pacific women's choice of communications

As the research process began, we found it critical not to classify communication tools as “new” and “old” technologies, but view them broadly. Hence we took into account traditional means of communication such as theater and face-to-face discussion alongside newer tools such as radio and television, and even newer ICTs such as cellular phones and computers.

In general, intermediary groups in Fiji viewed oral communication as most empowering for grassroots women. The key in empowering grassroots women was “to go and sit down with them.” Print media was also cited, given its accessibility and suitability to Fiji's reading culture, along with radio due to its reach and popularity among women. Theatre and performing arts and film were also considered empowering while television and telecommunications were not.

Intermediary groups in Fiji believed that new ICTs, particularly the internet, could be potentially empowering for grassroots women. However, new ICTs are largely inaccessible given infrastructure problems. Using the cellular phone likewise poses limitations. At the moment, only intermediary groups find new ICTs empowering for their own use. As such, traditional communication tools are more empowering for grassroots women.

A similar finding was made in Papua New Guinea, where both intermediary groups and grassroots women are concerned with peace efforts in the country especially in Bougainville. Many feminist groups also viewed empowerment as deeply connected to peace-keeping, as PNG's women are also heavily affected by the violence inflicted on them and their families due to the conflict in Bougainville. Many groups, like Kup Women for Peace, also see the interconnections among HIV/AIDS, violence and wars. Intermediary groups and grassroots women are likewise concerned on violence against women as gang rapes brought about by *raskolism* are common and there are heavy cultural barriers against reporting these crimes to the authorities. In these situations, women's groups take on the role of mediator, counselor and sometimes, legal aid and law enforcer.

Conclusion

The PC4D study verified that while the Internet and email, computers and mobile phones have much to offer, these were the least accessible to our ordinary women. Some of this “technology deprivation” may be explained by the absence of the necessary infrastructure such as electricity and networks (especially in rural areas), but also because of the low levels of technological literacy among the population, the high costs of the new technology and the depths of poverty amongst our peoples.

The quest for information, as we are finding in our rural and regional media and policy networks, is critical but it must be in local languages really to enable effective and interactive access by

women. This requires us to consider a multi-media platform that includes inter-personal communication, with more “traditional modes” such as leveraging on the power, efficiency and reach of radio to communicate, inform, educate and build networks across many groups of women. Women’s participation is dependent on their access to information in the vernacular, and safe spaces to discuss their issues.

Social media therefore have a role in taking Pacific women’s realities onto the global platform. FemLINKPACIFIC’s use of Facebook, for example is enabling us to share news and information such as Women’s Weather Watch reports, Peace and Security campaigns and women’s efforts to engage in Constitutional making and rebuilding democracy in Fiji. Podcasts are also enabling women to transform the media landscape.

Yes – the use of new media and social networks has important implications for society, culture, and politics but in the context of women of the global south, specifically from rural and remote islands, it is not a question of ethics – unless it is ensuring equity in the allocation of communication resource, it is rather ensuring that they are simply not left behind.

The challenge for feminist media networks, like FemLINKPACIFIC is not only to ensure that women we work with are reflected in a range of media content particularly as decision-makers able to claim and define their peace, human rights and human security. We also need to ensure that social media content particularly civil society campaigns ensure equitable space for women as well – in all our diversities.

LATIN AMERICA: Building new participation in communication networks

Dafne Sabanes Plou, journalist and social communicator

Introducción

América Latina despertó al uso masivo e intenso de Internet con el nuevo siglo. Viendo las estadísticas que produce regularmente Internet Stats¹³, en la última década la conexión a Internet en la región creció 1205%. El fenómeno abarca a todas las edades, y si bien continúan predominando como usuarios y usuarias los jóvenes menores de 30 años, cada vez más la población en edad activa accede al conocimiento de las herramientas y de las plataformas que permiten un uso adecuado de la web tanto en el campo laboral, como para la comunicación social y el entretenimiento. De los 400 millones de habitantes en los países de América del Sur, el 43% es usuario de Internet, ante una media mundial de 32%, mientras en que Centroamérica y México, de 155 millones de habitantes, el uso de Internet alcanza al 27,5% de la población.

Este crecimiento extraordinario implica también un desafío importante. El idioma castellano es el tercero en el ranking de idiomas más utilizados en Internet¹⁴, con poco más de 153 millones de personas que utilizan la web en ese idioma, mientras que el portugués ocupa el quinto lugar (82 millones de usuarios) gracias al amplio uso que hacen los brasileños de la web. En 2006, el número de sitios web en castellano era de 88 millones y el 45% de los mismos pertenecían a España. Esto quiere decir que un 55% de los contenidos se producen en otros países lo que deja en manos de la América Latina hispana el reto de publicar y difundir los acontecimientos políticos, sociales, económicos y culturales de sus pueblos, como así también su pensamiento, opinión y creaciones escritas, sonoras y audiovisuales. En este sentido, los latinoamericanos no se han sentido intimidados y sin duda han tomado la tarea en sus manos, si bien todavía, según opinan los analistas, falta aumentar y profundizar la producción de contenidos significativos, herramientas y modelos de negocios.

Los latinoamericanos tampoco han sido tímidos en el uso de las redes sociales y de los medios creados en la web interactiva. Esta participación entusiasta, y que crece principalmente entre los adolescentes y jóvenes menores de 20 años, incluye a buena parte de los usuarios y usuarias de Internet en la región que sumaban 223 millones a fines de 2011. Tomando en cuenta las estadísticas de Internet Stats, el 25,8% la población de América del Sur usa *Facebook*, mientras que en Centroamérica y México, el porcentaje es casi similar, un 24,7% de penetración. Podría decirse que prácticamente todas las personas que se conectan a Internet en este último grupo de países tienen una cuenta abierta en *Facebook*.

También es interesante seguir la participación de las personas de habla castellana en la *blogósfera*. Con estadísticas del 2011, Bitácoras.com ha logrado indexar en su informe¹⁵ a 576.681 blogs y registrar con perfil completo a 204.312 blogueros de 16 países de habla hispana. De ellos, el 72% son varones y el 28% mujeres, lo que denota un crecimiento interesante de la participación de blogueras en los últimos 2 años, ya que en 2009 eran sólo el 19% del total de los blogueros identificados. El 82% de estos blogueros están entre los 19 y los 44 años, y la edad de la mayoría (38%) está entre los 24 y 34 años. Los países

13 <http://www.internetworldstats.com/>

14 <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm>

15 <http://bitacoras.com/informe/11>

latinoamericanos con más blogueros entre los hispano parlantes son: Argentina (10.1%), México (8.6%), Chile (8%) y Perú (5.1%).

Pero no todo va tan bien en la blogósfera de habla castellana. Sólo un 7.63% de estos blogs se actualizan con cierta frecuencia y puede decirse que sólo un 3.21% puede considerarse activo. En temática abordada, los blogs sobre temáticas personales, un 22% del total en 2011, han ido disminuyendo en relación a años anteriores debido seguramente al auge del uso de las redes sociales, como Facebook y Twitter, que se centran en buena medida en la vida cotidiana de la gente y sus opiniones. Tienen buena lectura y concitan interés los blogs de noticias y sobre medios de comunicación, principalmente los que se centran en la televisión y en Internet.

También existen redes de blogueros hispanoparlantes, siendo las de mayor número de participantes la de reporteros y comunicadores y la de personas que escriben sobre medios de comunicación¹⁶. Lo interesante es que la mayoría de los diarios tradicionales incluyen blogs en sus sitios web que son muy seguidos por los lectores. Además, los blogs en general ya cuentan con enlaces en Facebook y Twitter, lo que hace que las publicaciones se conozcan de inmediato y llamen la atención de los lectores haciendo posible que así aumente su comunidad de influencia.

Los latinoamericanos también son muy activos en el uso de Twitter. Seis países en la región figuran entre los 20 con población más activa en esta red social en el mundo. Chile ocupa el primer lugar entre los países de la región, seguramente por el uso sostenido realizado por los estudiantes durante sus protestas callejeras en 2011, y es seguido por Venezuela, Brasil, Argentina, Colombia y México. En países donde no sólo las celebridades del cine y del mundo de la música y de la televisión son grandes usuarios de twitter, sino también sus principales figuras políticas, como ocurre en Venezuela y Argentina por ejemplo, hay un seguimiento continuo de estas cuentas por parte de los medios de comunicación. Así los contenidos de los *tweets* políticos ocupan de inmediato un espacio en los medios tradicionales, que incluyen ahora a las redes sociales como fuente de información.

Y no podemos dejar de lado el uso de *Youtube* para compartir videos, documentales y audiovisuales. En México, Perú y Chile este sitio ocupa el tercer lugar en tráfico en Internet, mientras que en Brasil, Argentina, Colombia y Venezuela ocupa el cuarto lugar. Ya existe una versión local del servicio en Argentina y México, donde están creciendo las campañas de publicidad en ese medio¹⁷. Las estadísticas de la empresa señalan que los usuarios de *Youtube* en la región tienen en promedio entre los 18 y los 54 años, lo que habla de un amplio espectro de la población conectada a Internet. Los videos también se reproducen en los celulares *smartphones* y los enlaces que se realizan desde *Facebook* y *Twitter* permiten que diariamente 4 millones de personas compartan sus materiales audiovisuales en estas plataformas¹⁸. El castellano es el segundo idioma más utilizado en *Youtube*, con un 11% de videos que circulan en ese idioma.

Otra dimensión importante de la participación de los latinoamericanos en la sociedad de la información está marcada por su colaboración con la Wikipedia, la gran enciclopedia colaborativa universal creada en el ciberespacio. Según las estadísticas que publica Wikipedia

16 Redactores, MediosyRedes, 100blogs son los primeros en la lista, por número de bitácoras que las componen <http://bitacorras.com/informe/11>

17 <http://llamanlaatencion.blogspot.com/2010/11/estadisticas-de-youtube-llego-los-mil.html>

18 <http://www.tuexperto.com/2011/03/05/youtube-en-cifras-las-estadisticas-de-youtube-en-2011/>

en castellano¹⁹, recibe diariamente unas 31 millones de visitas para leer sus 883.860 artículos o agregar unos 300 artículos por día. En este idioma, Wikipedia cuenta con 225 colaboradores muy activos y 1050 esporádicos. En 2008, entre los 10 países con editores y editoras más activos en castellano figuraban: Argentina, Perú, México, Colombia, Venezuela y Chile. La Wikipedia en portugués ocupa el décimo lugar entre las distintas versiones idiomáticas y cuenta con 719.728 artículos y 5564 usuarios activos²⁰.

Ante este panorama, constatamos que la población latinoamericana no sólo está accediendo a Internet a un ritmo acelerado sino que está haciendo un uso activo de distintas herramientas y espacios, en particular de las redes sociales para relacionarse, crear contenidos, compartirlos, producir información y comentar sobre la realidad de sus países con imágenes, preguntas, opiniones y conocimientos. Pero, tanta actividad en línea ¿marca alternativas al discurso imperante? ¿o se trata nada más que de una participación basada en el puro entretenimiento? ¿Podría decirse que esto contribuye de modo sustancial a la construcción de la sociedad de la información en la región? ¿Significa que se está logrando una democratización de la producción y circulación de información en América Latina? Son preguntas que no siempre encuentran respuestas claras, pero que será interesante mantener sobre la mesa de discusiones.

La vida real también ocurre en el ciberespacio

Podríamos decir que vivimos entre tres pantallas: la televisión, la computadora y el celular. Y esto no ocurre únicamente con los adolescentes, sino también con los adultos para quienes estas tres pantallas también constituyen parte de su vida diaria. Para los adultos el uso quizá no está tan basado en el entretenimiento o en relacionarse con las amistades como ocurre con los más jóvenes, sino atado a lo laboral, a la información al instante, al acontecimiento que no se puede dejar de conocer o sobre el cual hay que emitir opinión.

La sociedad latinoamericana, con un 43% de su población ya conectada a Internet en Sudamérica y un 27,5% en Centroamérica, y con un uso masivo de teléfonos celulares²¹ aunque todavía los *smartphones* no son mayoría, ya ha asumido que el acceso a la conectividad y a la participación en el ciberespacio son aspectos importantes de su vida actual y futura. Para sus jóvenes, como señala la especialista argentina Roxana Morduchowicz en su último libro²², existen procesos socioculturales que intervienen en el uso, la socialización y la significación de la web que determinan hasta qué punto la producción de contenidos en los blogs y en las redes sociales forma parte de la construcción de su identidad. Para muchos adultos, la presencia y participación activas en el ciberespacio construyen su identidad laboral y también, según el ámbito en el que se desempeñe, su identidad social.

Ante este panorama, los esfuerzos que una buena parte de los gobiernos latinoamericanos realizan para que el uso de las computadoras en la escuela no se limite a un laboratorio sino que forme parte de la educación integral del alumnado deberían tener como meta principal avanzar en la inclusión digital y social de una generación que seguramente no podrá aspirar a un trabajo digno ni a un desarrollo personal significativo sin acceso ni conocimiento de los

19 <https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Estado%20de%20stic>

20 https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia_en_portugu%C3%A9s

21 Según Internet Stats, hay 370 millones de suscriptores de telefonía celular en América Latina, o sea un 92% de la población www.internetworldstats.com

22 *Los adolescentes y las redes sociales. La construcción de la identidad juvenil en Internet*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, Buenos Aires, 2012

medios digitales y del uso de las redes sociales en Internet.

Ya un porcentaje importante de la población en la región transcurre su vida en dos espacios: el virtual y el real, y la conexión entre ambos casi se ha tornado directa. Las personas entran y salen de estos espacios sin mayores dificultades y se interconectan salvando las distancias geográficas.

La interacción en tiempo real a través de las redes sociales es cotidiana y su atractivo genera la adhesión de personas de los más diversos niveles sociales. Sin duda, lo más importante de las tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación es que cualquier usuario o usuaria tienen la posibilidad de crear contenidos y ser ellos también productores de información en variados formatos, blogs y miniblogs (como las intervenciones en *Facebook* o *Twitter*), con imágenes, sonido o audiovisuales. La popularidad de los *podcasts* que pueden grabarse con un celular común ha pasado de ser una herramienta típica de blogs de periodistas para convertirse en una manera usual de dar a conocer noticias familiares, momentos de diversión entre amistades y hechos informativos que suelen llegar a alimentar como crowdsourcing los sitios de los grandes diarios y agencias de noticias.

Pero estos avances en el uso de las tecnologías en la región coexisten con usos acotados que deben tenerse en cuenta con el fin de lograr verdadera inclusión digital y social. En un estudio realizado en Chile por las investigadoras sociales Alejandra Phillippi y Patricia Peña²³ con mujeres de zonas rurales y barrios urbano marginales que participan del programa “Quiero mi Barrio”, de acceso público a las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación en telecentros barriales, se constató que las usuarias reconocieron un alto porcentaje de acceso a *Facebook* (76%), lo que contrasta con su acceso en línea a medios de comunicación nacionales, como diarios electrónicos (20%) y canales de televisión (12%). Pero estas mujeres todavía precisan comprender mejor la convergencia de medios de comunicación en Internet para aprovechar los recursos que ofrece el acceso a la información, al entretenimiento y a la comunicación para su propio crecimiento personal. Para una parte importante de la población, el acceso en términos de conectividad no siempre va de la mano de un uso de las tecnologías que marque avances en su comprensión de la realidad o una ampliación de las fronteras de su mundo cotidiano.

El ejemplo chileno puede transportarse a cualquier otro país de la región, donde usuarios y usuarias de sectores populares comienzan su actividad en Internet a través de *Facebook*, sin necesidad de pasar por el uso de correo electrónico como primer paso. Esta plataforma de comunicación amigable, colorida, en movimiento constante y sencilla de usar es fácilmente adaptable a las posibilidades de acceso a la comunicación digital de esta parte de la población. Pero, ¿sabrán cómo preservar su privacidad y su seguridad cuando usan las redes sociales? Este es uno de los mayores dilemas del momento: la entrega de información personal a los dueños de las redes sociales que de manera ingenua y desaprensiva lleva a cabo buena parte de la población.

Si bien desde las escuelas y las asociaciones de profesionales dedicados principalmente a la educación, la psicología y la comunicación social se alerta a las familias sobre el uso informado

23 *Mujeres y nuevas tecnologías en Chile: el impacto del acceso público a las TIC, la inclusión digital de género*, resultados de la investigación presentada en el Congreso Internacional de FLACSO sobre “Las políticas de equidad de género en perspectiva: nuevos escenarios, actores y articulaciones, Buenos Aires, noviembre 2010, www.catunescomujer.org

de las redes sociales que debería tener en cuenta la población adolescente y joven, es cierto que también las personas adultas suelen poner poco resguardo a sus datos personales cuando las utilizan. Por otro lado, desde la propia administración de estas plataformas se incentiva a que la gente de a conocer su ubicación, los pormenores de sus actividades y de sus consumos con el fin de aumentar sus propias ventas de publicidad y sus bases de datos con fines comerciales. La cuestión ética sobre el uso comercial de los datos personales sigue siendo un punto de discusión crucial, sin solución visible por el momento.

A esta altura, podríamos decir que existe una delgada línea de separación entre los intereses comerciales de las empresas que ofrecen sus servicios de comunicación en el ciberespacio y los intereses y los derechos de las personas que los utilizan. ¿Es posible hacer un uso con sentido de las redes sociales, sin fines de lucro, y crear o proyectar medios de comunicación en Internet que permitan dar a conocer visiones alternativas de la política, la sociedad, la economía y la cultura, entre otros?

Democratización de las comunicaciones: “latidos en la era digital”

Cuando a fines de la década de los 80 en el siglo pasado irrumpieron las radios comunitarias en el espectro comunicacional latinoamericano, una bocanada de aire fresco, y hasta de viento fuerte, pudo respirarse y sentirse en la región. El movimiento de radios comunitarias logró romper con un esquema comunicacional basado en el poder de los grupos de familias tradicionales y poderosas en los países que eran dueñas de los principales medios de comunicación, como también de las corporaciones comerciales que poco atendían a las necesidades comunicacionales de la población.

La lucha por la legalización de las radios comunitarias ha sido importante durante todos estos años, como también la lucha por democratizar los contenidos radiales, con participación de otros actores sociales, nuevas voces y expresiones culturales, abiertos a la diversidad racial y étnica del continente. La vigencia actual de estas radios es posible y se ha fortalecido gracias a un uso con sentido y estratégico de la comunicación electrónica y las redes sociales en Internet.

Como era de esperar, las radios comunitarias ya no se limitan a transmitir sus mensajes por las ondas radioeléctricas. Decenas de ellas han adoptado también la transmisión de contenidos por Internet y realizan un uso creativo de todos los espacios y herramientas que brinda la comunicación electrónica. Un ejemplo interesante de ello lo ofrece una de las radios comunitarias y ciudadanas emblemáticas de Argentina, la Radio La Tribu con sus “latidos en la era digital”, como ella misma se describe en su sitio web en Internet²⁴.

Una simple mirada a la portada del sitio ya nos ubica en esta convergencia entre medios tradicionales y digitales: la radio comunitaria cobra presencia con un blog de actualidad; una agencia periodística en línea; una sección donde se ponen a disposición *podcasts* para “descargar, multiplicar, desarmar y reutilizar” con una mirada no propietaria de contenido abierto y la posibilidad de compartir información y conocimientos; materiales de comunicación alternativa para uso abierto; producciones audiovisuales y un trabajo de difusión de la cultura tecnológica alternativa que se construye alrededor de los festivales de cultura alternativa y copyleft, que ya van por su cuarta edición.

24 <http://www.fmlatribu.com/>

La organización latinoamericana de la Asociación Mundial de Radios Comunitarias (AMARC AL) cuenta en este momento con la membresía de unas 400 radios urbanas y rurales en 18 países de la región. Su actividad incluye una serie de servicios que no sólo son importantes para aumentar la actividad y la consistencia comunicacional de sus asociadas, sino que también marca una tendencia importante en la producción de información y noticias desde los grupos de base, las comunidades y sus propios reporteros y reporteras barriales.

Con transmisiones al instante de noticias en castellano y portugués, la Agencia Púlsar, de AMARC AL, ofrece en su sitio²⁵ también la posibilidad de conectarse a la transmisión en vivo de las asociadas que así lo dispongan y la posibilidad de bajar audios en formato mp3 de reportajes y notas sobre los temas más candentes. Todo esto se complementa con la posibilidad de dar una mirada a los principales titulares del día en los diarios latinoamericanos y acceder a la base de datos y otras publicaciones de la organización. La gestión de información abierta es una realidad democratizadora que ponen en práctica las radios de AMARC AL con el fin de que aun las emisoras con menos recursos económicos cuenten con información al día y materiales sustanciosos para incluir en sus transmisiones. Tanto la Radio La Tribu, con los sitios de AMARC AL y la Agencia Púlsar tienen enlaces a *Facebook* y a *Twitter*, prolongando su trabajo e información en las redes sociales. La asociación también posee una wiki colaborativa para su trabajo interno.

Pero la función de AMARC AL se fortalece con uno de sus programas específicamente enfocado en Legislaciones y Derecho a la Comunicación. Con énfasis en la radiodifusión, este programa ha posicionado a AMARC AL tanto ante gobiernos como ante la sociedad como una entidad activa en la defensa de los derechos a la libertad de expresión y a la comunicación tanto en el mundo real como en el virtual. La tarea principal de este programa es impulsar la democratización de las políticas y de los marcos regulatorios en materia de información y comunicación en los países de la región, haciendo énfasis en el trabajo de las radios comunitarias. Por medio del lobby nacional e internacional, servicios de asesoría jurídica y técnica, investigaciones y monitoreo permanente, el Programa promueve el fortalecimiento de las asociadas y redes nacionales para defender y ejercer sus derechos. También ha organizado varias misiones a países de la región para apoyar la labor en favor de legislaciones democratizadoras de la comunicación como también ante intervenir ante actos arbitrarios o represivos de la labor de las radios comunitarias.

Internet, redes y medios sociales, agencias de noticias en línea y medios de comunicación tradicionales: todos ellos interconectados para impulsar nuevas perspectivas de la producción de información, comunicación y tecnología. También para aumentar la participación de actores y actrices sociales de todos los sectores, promover el respeto a la diversidad de ideas y de creaciones y trabajar por una democracia auténtica en los medios reales y virtuales, todo ello muy necesario para lograr inclusión social y digital.

Contra la violencia: acciones concretas para fortalecer a las redes de mujeres

Entre 2009 y 2011, organizaciones dedicadas a la comunicación digital en cuatro países latinoamericanos participaron de una investigación en el marco de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio 3: Equidad de género. Esta investigación fue coordinada por el Programa de Mujeres de la Asociación para el Progreso de las Comunicaciones (PARM APC)²⁶. Brasil,

25 <http://www.agenciapulsar.org/tapa.php>

26 <http://www.apc.org>

Colombia, México y Argentina²⁷ fueron los países elegidos para monitorear y hacer seguimiento sobre la situación de la violencia contra las mujeres haciendo uso de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación y también la manera en que se pueden fortalecer las redes de mujeres para erradicar esta violencia tanto de la vida real como de la virtual.

No hay duda que en los espacios virtuales se reflejan muchas de las conductas, manifestaciones y tendencias que encontramos en la vida real. Lamentablemente, la violencia contra las mujeres es una de ellas. La investigación que se realizó en estos 4 países latinoamericanos arrojó resultados similares a las que se llevaron a cabo en otros 8 países de otras dos regiones, África y Asia. Las principales manifestaciones de violencia contra las mujeres usando tecnología (tanto computadoras como teléfonos móviles) pueden resumirse en tres: ciberacoso y vigilancia; acoso sexual; y robo y uso distorsionado y agresivo de imágenes de mujeres sin su consentimiento.

Así como la pareja violenta encierra y limita las relaciones de su mujer en la vida real, también limita sus comunicaciones digitales, pretende vigilar sus relaciones en el mundo virtual y controlar cada mensaje de texto, cuando no usa el celular como instrumento para mantener una supervisión al instante de los movimientos y acciones de su pareja. En cuanto al acoso sexual, muchos acosadores se esconden tras el anonimato o los perfiles con nombres de fantasía que pueden usarse en chats y foros de Internet para cercar a sus víctimas, molestarlas y agredirlas. Muchas mujeres sienten que este acoso sexual virtual es más amenazante que el real porque al no conocer personalmente a los acosadores tienen temor de ser interceptadas por un desconocido agresivo en la calle, sin estar preparadas ni poder manejar la situación. En cuanto al robo y uso de imágenes, hay mujeres que sufren conductas vengativas de sus parejas o ex parejas quienes hacen circular sus imágenes montadas en situaciones bochornosas o de carácter sexual con el fin de difamarlas, agredirlas y poner en tela de juicio su reputación. La circulación viral de estas imágenes en Internet y por celulares crea situaciones difíciles de afrontar y de detener, ya que será difícil quitar de una vez y para siempre estos materiales difamatorios de la gran red.

En el trabajo por erradicar la violencia de género también en Internet, PARM APC implementó una serie de actividades y acciones en los cuatro países mencionados que incluyeron talleres de capacitación en uso de tecnologías para erradicar la violencia contra las mujeres, la entrega de pequeños subsidios para realizar acciones locales con el fin de crear conciencia sobre la incidencia de la violencia de género en Internet y la participación en la campaña “Dominemos la tecnología”. Desde 2006, esta campaña contribuye a los *16 Días de Activismo contra la Violencia contra las Mujeres*, acción internacional contra la violencia de género que se lleva a cabo desde el 25 de noviembre al 10 de diciembre. “Dominemos la tecnología” llama a utilizar los espacios virtuales y diversas herramientas tecnológicas para prevenir y denunciar este tipo de violencia²⁸

En 2011 la campaña incluyó armar un mapeo virtual de los casos de violencia usando tecnologías de la información y la comunicación, con el fin de juntar evidencia para sustentar pedidos a legisladores/as, fiscalías, gobiernos y empresas con el fin de que actúen ante las denuncias que hacen las mujeres y sus organizaciones. Ocurre que muchas veces estas

27 Los informes sobre violencia y uso de tecnologías de la información y la comunicación en estos países se encuentran en www.genderit.org en la sección Violencia contra la mujer. Este proyecto fue desarrollado por el Programa de Mujeres de la Asociación para el Progreso de las Comunicaciones www.apc.org

28 <http://www.takebackthetech.net/>

situaciones no son tomadas en serio por las autoridades ni se las cree peligrosas para la integridad de las mujeres por tener lugar en un espacio virtual. Debido a ello, por lo general, no se acciona ni se legisla al respecto. El mapeo, realizada con la *plataforma ushahidi*, permitió documentar 192 casos de violencia de género en Internet²⁹ ocurridos en más de una docena de países, incluyendo los cuatro países latinoamericanos escogidos.

Si bien en la última década varios países en la región han puesto en vigencia nuevas legislaciones contra la violencia de género, agravando las penas para los agresores y creando servicios para la prevención, el acompañamiento y la contención de las sobrevivientes de dicha violencia, ninguno ha puesto su mirada en la violencia de género virtual. Sólo la ley aprobada en 2009 en Argentina incluye las figuras de “violencia simbólica” y “violencia mediática”, referidas principalmente a los mensajes en los medios que se basen en “patrones estereotipados que transmitan y reproduzcan dominación, desigualdad y discriminación en las relaciones sociales, naturalizando la subordinación de la mujer en la sociedad como también aquellos mensajes que, por palabra escrita, audio o imágenes, promuevan la explotación de mujeres o sus imágenes, injurien, difamen, discriminen, deshonren, humillen o atenten contra la dignidad de las mujeres”³⁰.

Según la opinión de especialistas en derecho informático, no hace falta que se dicte una legislación específica para sancionar delitos que ocurren en el espacio virtual, sino que basta con aplicar la legislación vigente en el mundo real. Tal como señalamos anteriormente, las personas pasan de las actividades en el espacio virtual al real prácticamente sin dificultades, por lo que no debería existir una valoración distinta de la comisión de delitos en el ciberespacio. Toda persona adulta debería estar en condiciones de responder ante los requerimientos de la ley, pero también las autoridades correspondientes tendrían que estar dispuestas a considerar la violencia de género virtual con la misma valoración que la que ocurre en la vida real. Un tema sobre el cual hay mucho por hacer en América Latina.

La web colaborativa: Wikipedia y la participación de las mujeres latinoamericanas

Todavía son pocas las mujeres que participan como redactoras o editoras de artículos de Wikipedia. Apenas llegan al 19% del total y sólo el 13% de las personas con biografía en la enciclopedia son mujeres. Pero desde los editores y editoras generales de la publicación se están haciendo esfuerzos para que este panorama cambie hacia una mayor equidad, con la expectativa que para 2015 las editoras mujeres lleguen al 25% del total.

Como relata el periodista Pepe Flores³¹ en un artículo en el que señala esta falta de mujeres y de perspectiva de género en los equipos redactores de Wikipedia, la brecha de género es una de las problemáticas más estudiadas por la sociología del conocimiento y en el caso de Wikipedia “el problema del género no se refleja en la cantidad de artículos, sino en el énfasis y la profundidad”. No se trata entonces de cumplir con cuotas, sino de lograr que los editores y editoras contribuyan de manera equitativa con los contenidos y tengan en cuenta la mirada de género.

Para dar respuesta a esta inquietud, la Fundación Wikipedia creó el WikiConcurso Mujeres Iberoamericanas para promover la creación y edición de artículos sobre mujeres prominentes

29 <https://www.apc.org/ushahidi/>

30 Ley 26485, de Protección integral a las mujeres

31 <http://alt1040.com/2012/04/genero-wikipedia>

en la región para ser incluidos en la enciclopedia virtual. Los resultados del concurso se dieron a conocer el 8 de marzo de 2012, Día Internacional de la Mujer y lo interesante es que participaron de él tanto mujeres como hombres que escribieron materiales inéditos en Wikipedia y que destacan la vida y contribución de decenas de mujeres latinoamericanas en las más diversas áreas: deportes, arte, cultura, ciencia, tecnología, música, política, economía, luchas sociales, etc. Según el jurado, estas contribuciones fueron de nivel alto y los aportes logrados para el concurso sumaron 504 artículos a Wikipedia en castellano.³²

Pero el esfuerzo no termina allí. Un grupo activo de mujeres dedicadas al desarrollo del software libre y los contenidos abiertos en Internet, varias de ellas wikipedistas, han decidido reunirse en un WikiWomencamp³³ que tendrá lugar en Argentina, en mayo de 2012. También se incluye una jornada sobre Wikigénero, para discutir las mejores maneras de contribuir a la enciclopedia desde la perspectiva de las mujeres. Existen capítulos de WikiWomen en Argentina, Chile y Venezuela y están en formación en Bolivia, Colombia y Brasil.

Conclusiones y recomendaciones

El panorama del uso de los medios y las redes sociales electrónicas en América Latina es bien diverso y todavía resulta novedoso. En algunos estudios a nivel mundial ya se habla de una saturación de los usos de las redes sociales, porque sus usuarios y usuarias ya no tienen tiempo disponible para más. En esta región el número de integrantes de estas redes crece a diario y se expande a todos los sectores sociales y también a todas las edades. Las personas ya tienen acceso a mucha información, desde distintas ópticas y signos políticos, como también a espacios de participación que les permiten desarrollar intereses y conocimientos que antes tenían relegados o nuevos. Crear contenidos desde las experiencias cotidianas, como también desde el mundo laboral o los estudios e investigaciones en las que cada cual se ha dedicado ya son cosa de todos los días. También indagar, descubrir, recrear y compartir conocimientos.

La sociedad de la información está en plena marcha y se construye día a día en la región. Será importante que los gobiernos cumplan con los planes de acceso universal para la población, también por banda ancha, y con los planes educativos que permitan que la participación en Internet sea una opción para todos, a precios asequibles y con redes estables y reglas de participación que respeten la libertad de expresión, de asociación y de participación activa en el desarrollo de contenidos en Internet.

Desde las organizaciones sociales y la ciudadanía, será importante que se continúe reforzando el uso comunitario y no comercial de Internet. Si bien las redes sociales propietarias concitan mucho interés y actividad, es posible observar que desde las organizaciones sociales se las utiliza como un complemento más a su propio sistema de comunicación. Conscientes de la necesidad de proteger datos y privacidad, como también por no resultarles confiables, los usos de las redes sociales que realizan las organizaciones se limitan a publicitar y dar más visibilidad a sus causas y acciones. Su apropiación de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación pretende ir más allá, fomentando la creación y los contenidos propios y las expresiones de compromiso que vayan más allá de un simple click en “me gusta”.

Como señalan Adilson Cabral y Eula Dantas Taveira en un trabajo sobre el tema³⁴, la

32 <http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/suplementos/las12/13-7148-2012-03-23.html>

33 <http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/WikiWomenCamp>

34 *Inclusão digital para a inclusão social: Perspectivas e paradoxos*, Adilson Cabral Filho y Eula Dantas Taveira Cabral, REVISTA DEBATES, Porto Alegre, v.4, n.1, p. 11-28, jan.-jun. 2010

apropiación social de estas tecnologías implica una visión superadora de la propiedad privada del conocimiento, para beneficio propio y con el fin sacar ventaja y diferenciarse del resto. Esta apropiación social significa tomar conciencia del valor de la producción colectiva de significados y conocimientos y afirmar que la relación de las personas con la tecnología también tiene un valor democratizador.

Así como las teorías referidas a la comunicación popular de las décadas del 70 y del 80, y las que desarrollaron los conceptos de comunicación comunitaria que tanta fuerza cobraron en la década del 90, dieron sustento a las prácticas comunicacionales de los movimientos sociales a fines del siglo pasado, en la actualidad la capacidad de articular y trabajar en redes de comunicación con contenidos abiertos, tecnologías no propietarias y con construcción colectiva y multimediática de informaciones y conocimientos da sustento a un nuevo ejercicio de ciudadanía que se concreta tanto en el ámbito virtual como en el real.

No hace falta repetir que el éxito de muchas grandes concentraciones y protestas callejeras que tienen como protagonistas a los movimientos sociales actuales encuentran sustento para su éxito en las redes electrónicas, con convocatorias por *Facebook*, tuiteos y mensajería instantánea por celular que favorecen la organización espontánea, el intercambio de consignas, la realización de acciones en terreno, además de la transmisión de las mismas al instante y desde la óptica de la propia gente sin esperar el armado de la noticia por los medios corporativos o por aquellos controlados por gobiernos autoritarios. Ya no es posible ocultar la realidad ni tergiversar lo que las numerosas cámaras y micrófonos transmiten en un *crowdsourcing* democratizador.

Cada vez más la sociedad valora los derechos a la comunicación como un derecho humano cuyo ejercicio contribuye a su vez a la realización de otros derechos humanos fundamentales. Como señalan Cabral y Taveira en su artículo, “la complejidad del proceso comunicacional en la sociedad contemporánea requiere del acceso a todos los medios de comunicación existentes para que la interlocución social ocurra en diversos niveles” y pueda llegarse a la formulación de políticas públicas que emanen de la propia sociedad civil. Porque apropiarse socialmente de las tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación implica asumir otras dimensiones de la comunicación y de las tecnologías y no sólo las que se limitan a hacer funcionar una computadora o a navegar por Internet. Saber aprovechar los recursos que circulan en el ciberespacio y crear contenidos para el mundo virtual y el real de manera colectiva y abierta, teniendo como meta la apropiación comunitaria de los mismos, permite pensar en la construcción de nuevos bienes comunes para avanzar en conocimientos y producción de sentidos con función social.

Por todo lo anterior, podemos señalar que el ciberespacio también es un lugar donde se juega políticamente, no sólo políticas comunicacionales sino políticas concebidas desde la ideología del control, del dominio unilateral y del poder. En América Latina todavía no se viven los embates por controlar Internet y la circulación de contenidos en el ciberespacio, como también a la población por medio de su actividad electrónica. Estos embates han generado gran discusión en varios países del Norte que se consideran democráticos y ya imperan medidas restrictivas en el mundo virtual en países con gobiernos represores, que también manejan con autoritarismo la vida real de los ciudadanos.

Para las organizaciones y movimientos sociales y para la ciudadanía que no está dispuesta a dejarse llevar por una comunicación facilista, ligera, llena de slogans e imágenes de comercial

de televisión, la comunicación alternativa también en el ciberespacio es un instrumento para generar ideas, opinión, discusión, para problematizar la realidad y pensar en transformaciones que permitan seguir construyendo nuevas formas de procesar la realidad para crecer en comunidad.

La opción ética es clara, como lo fue en décadas anteriores, cuando se hablaba de una comunicación solidaria y con sentido social para crear comunidad. La tecnología puede ser un mecanismo de dominación si no está al servicio de las personas³⁵. En la Declaración de la Sociedad Civil en el marco de la Cumbre Mundial de la Sociedad de la Información, en 2003³⁶, se establecen las opciones con claridad desde su título: “construir sociedades de la información que atiendan las necesidades humanas”. Para ello es fundamental continuar bregando por la comunicación como un proceso social esencial, una necesidad humana básica y el fundamento de toda organización social que se quiera participativa, democrática y solidaria.

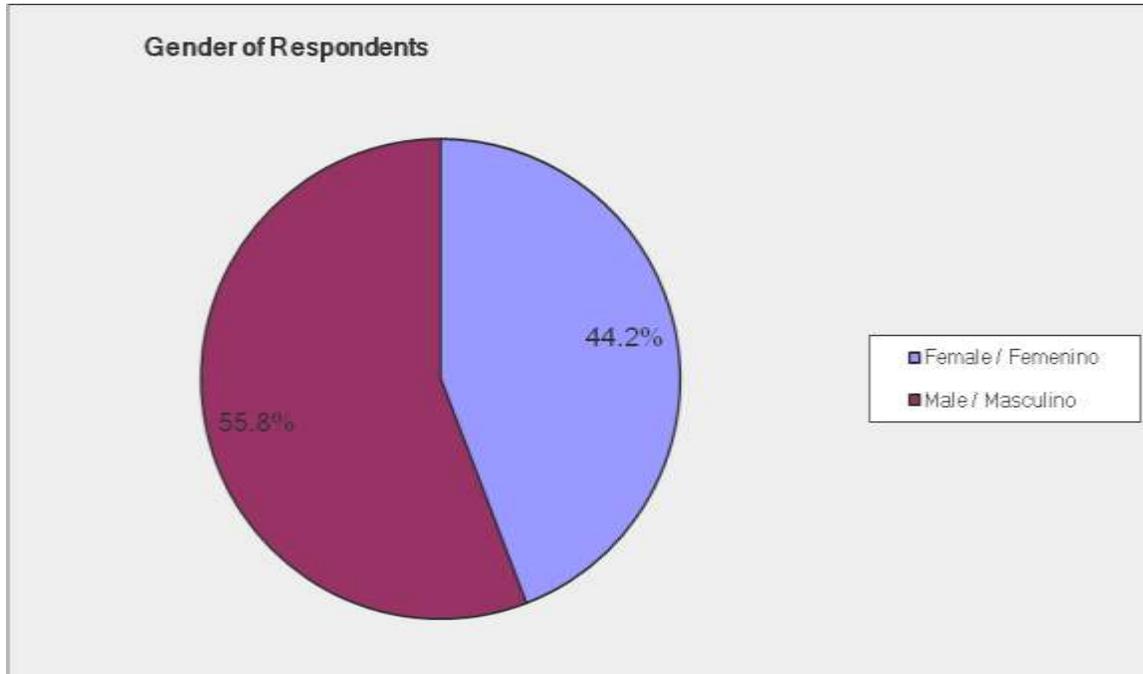
Nota de la autora: se accedió a todos los documentos citados que se alojan en Internet entre marzo y abril de 2012

35 El nuevo panóptico y la revolución comunicacional, ponencia de ARGENPRESS en el Taller Internacional, en La Habana, Cuba: “Los Medios Alternativos y las Redes Sociales”, diciembre 2011.

36 <file:///c:/Users/Owner/Documents/WSIS%202008/declaracion%20sociedad%20civil%202003.htm>

WACC Survey Results: Social media and Ethics

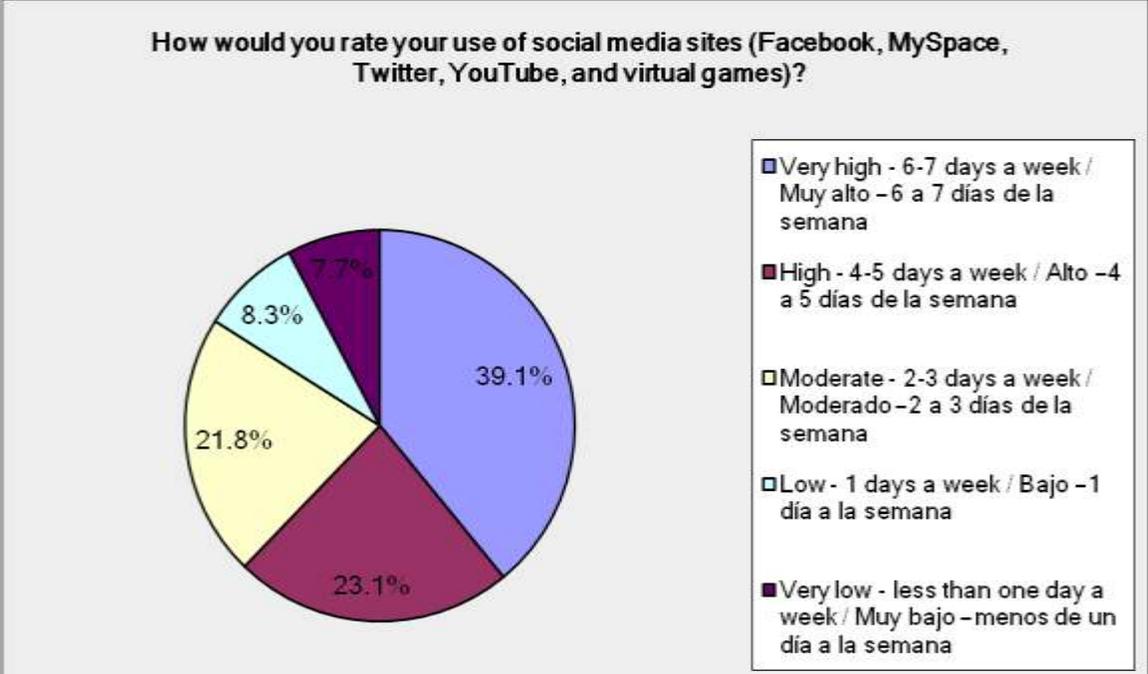
Question1: Gender of Respondents



Question2: Location of respondent

Location	Response Percent
Africa	21.2%
Asia	14.1%
Pacific	1.3%
Caribbean	0.6%
Europe	21.2%
Latin America	21.2%
Middle East	3.2%
North America	17.3%

Question 3: Frequency of use of social media sites

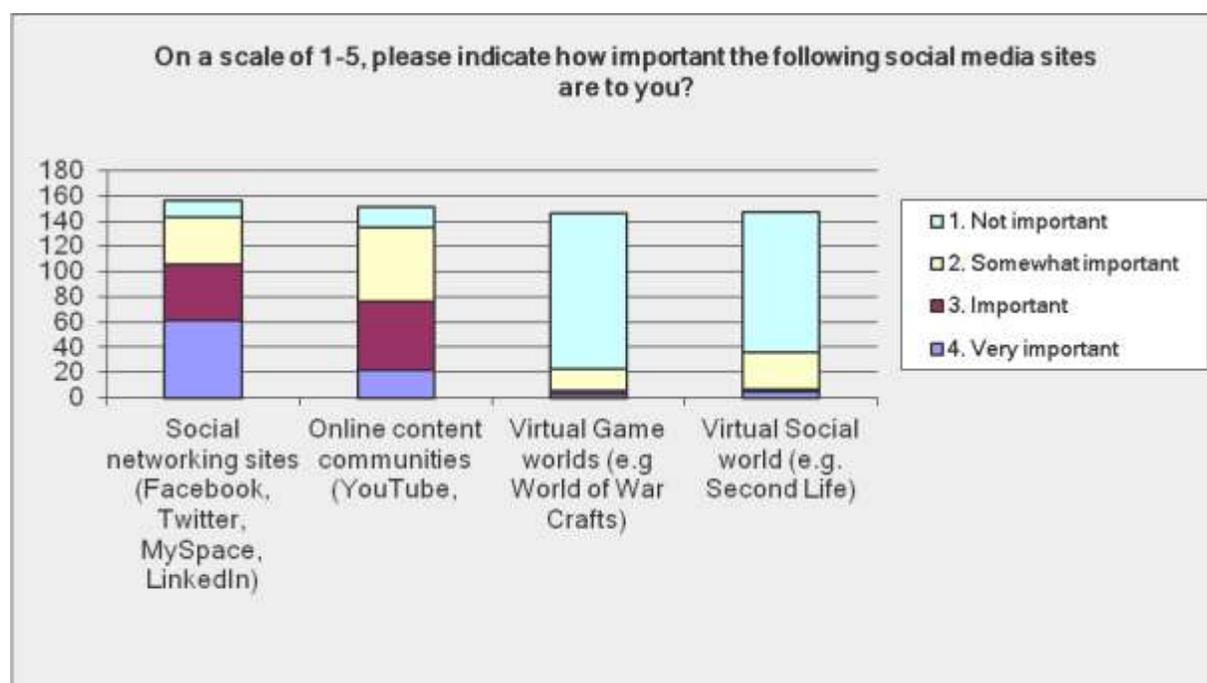


Question 4: Access to social media sites

On a scale of 1-5, please indicate how easy it is for you to access social media sites.

Answer Options	Very difficult	Difficult	Somewhat easy	Easy	Very easy	N/A	Rating Average
At home on a personal computer,	3	0	10	35	102	4	4.55
At work on a computer	2	4	10	37	78	12	4.41
From a computer at internet cafe	9	11	16	27	39	33	3.75
On my cell phone	13	16	18	20	35	38	3.47
Through a game console (Wii, Xbox etc)	25	6	5	4	7	88	2.19

Question 5: Importance of social media sites



Question 6: Use of social media sites

How do you use social media sites?					
Answer Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Response Count
To connect with friends and family	82	50	9	10	151
To raise awareness and promote a cause or an issue	71	60	10	12	153
To get news and information	64	63	13	13	153
To contact potential employers or find work	17	45	46	38	146

Question 7: What kinds of censorship or obstruction to using social media sites are you aware of?

What kinds of censorship or obstruction to using social media sites are you aware of? /

Answer Options	Response Count
<i>answered question</i>	129
<i>skipped question</i>	27

I am not aware of censorship to using social media sites in my country, India.
I do not know about censorship in social media. For me the problem is opposite: invasion of privacy. For instance, there are some companies asking for personal password of Facebook in job interviews. This is a serious perversion of social networks that need to be a free space to share ideas, affections, positions. Of course, responsibility is also necessary on contents and images shared.
I have not found any obstacles.
National Security in the country, lack of internet access in many places especially out of the capital Cairo
Some countries regulate use of SN sites...some filtering, some blocking, for different reasons (political, culture;/religious/ethnic, "harmful content").
In India the government has been in discussion with Facebook and Twitter about regulation of content. The government wants censorship with regard to hurting religious sentiments, misrepresenting politicians and anti-national work. The problem is that all this could be something which the government perceives and not something which may be true from a neutral point of view.
Most people believe that their privacy rights would be abused, so they are inhibited in using the social media.
Unequal infrastructure - Internet, mobile networks
Use of vulgar language and explicit pictures is not allowed as this could lead to one's account being closed. One cannot also use social media sites to advance violence or promote terrorist activities. Other than that hate speech targeting certain individuals is part of the obstruction that one may encounter.
Pornography, nudity and anything immoral.
porn, child porn, over sex situations and erotic stuff. anything that America considers 'a terrorist activity'
Personally I have no obstacle in using social networks, but to use them in my publishing house a specific training course is needed on how to manage them.
None in South Africa. Aware of censorship in other areas
Our organisation works with children and adolescents from poor districts and we always teach them the dangers of contacting strangers via networks because often there are links to trafficking and many children have been snared, sold and sexually abused.
Apart from some organizations/companies restricting their employees' use of social media sites during work hours (except when used for work related purposes) I'm not aware of other obstruction or censorship.
Haven't met it impeding what I'm doing, but I keep up with advocacy efforts to challenge corporate control and monopolization of the media.
I am aware of some of the content limitations but am more concerned with protecting privacy and the default setting of many of these platforms is to share with the public information you would only like to share with friends.

<p>1. Network is sometimes down; 2.Or sometimes connectivity is so slow that it becomes a total waste of time to try and get or send online content. 3. Costs can be exorbitant especially in some cybercafés; 4. Sometimes there is lack of software to support the required content e.g. audio and graphical content; 5. Sometimes it is the physical distance to travel before you can access the connectivity. etc. 6. Lack of hardware esp in most of our non-tertiary institutions of learning. 7. Inadequate knowledge and skills particularly internet literacy skills. Not many people here can be able to evaluate the credibility of the sites and the information found online. This knowledge gap needs to be seriously addressed, how, when by whom? 8. Hackers are quite a threat, in the last two or so years about 4000 sites have been hacked. 9. Disconnection of physical lines, e.g. recently our undersea cable off the Mombasa coastline was cut. 10. Theft of ground cables, among others.</p>
<p>It is common in Uganda that telephone networks are sometimes not available. It is not clear to most people and telephone companies normally do not explain or apologize for interruptions. So if telephone networks are not available, social media become also unavailable.</p>
<p>Lack of internet access or slow internet access</p>
<p>Most of the problems I have had relate to changes by the providers of search engines, where these are providing less information than they used to (in an effort to guess what exactly I am looking for). I get far fewer hits than I used to on Google searches, for example, because they are trying to tailor the results to my tastes and location--which is exactly what I don't want, since I am not a typical searcher. So, I would say the majority of the censorship I encounter is an unintended side effect of efforts to strengthen search logarithms.</p>
<p>It is in Myanmar. Military government now nominal civilian government (still military controlled) is still monitoring in details and notoriously control the speed of the internet and many websites are not allowed. But whatever is allowed is quite sufficient for the social networking activities and many are using by passing proxy etc.</p>
<p>I am aware of some self-censorship, primarily to avoid theft of my identity. However I do believe my use of Facebook has had a positive influence. Quite a number of "friends" seem to appreciate my posts, many dealing with the U.S. political situation and the Middle East.</p>
<p>There are many kinds of problems that circulated through the social media sites like filthy videos, morphed pictures, and so on. which sometimes lower the standard of the users if she/he is not careful especially for teenagers, because of the freedom the social media gave to people is so much so that without aware that the videos and pictures they share in social media are published to the globe.</p>
<p>In the US, media consolidation is causing people to be directed to a limited number of sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, to the detriment of other sites. If bandwidth limits are imposed, then access to many sites such as YouTube are going to be limited, especially for low-income people. However, I am not aware of direct censorship.</p>
<p>In this part of Latin America I am not aware of any censorship. I am aware of such censorship in other countries such as China, several Middle Eastern countries and a number of other Asian countries. In Latin America the most common barrier to social media use is lack of Internet access.</p>
<p>We are not encouraged to engage in the usage of social media sites during office hours though we are increasingly being requested to consider introducing the same. There are some documents which we are not allowed to upload immediately they are available unless permission is sought. The leadership at my place of work are not so keen at employing the use of social media</p>
<p>Not at all, only self-censorship since sometimes you find simple, superficial content.</p>
<p>I have never been faced any censorship or obstruction. However, once during the state of emergency all Facebook communication was shut down for couple of hours.</p>

Facebook and Google use of the information I share for their commercial purposes.
Technical censorship: -Internet Protocol (IP) address blocking, denying access to certain IP address; -Full block, complete cut off all routers, either by software or by hardware -URL Uniform Resource Locator filtering: -Packet filtering. Non-technical censorship: -Laws and regulations; -Formal and informal requests to remove, alter, slant, or block access to specific sites or content. -Publishers subjected to arrest, imprisonment, prosecution. -Equipment may be confiscated. -Publishers and their families may be subject to threats. -Limitation of access to internet
I usually apply self-regulation but I am not aware that there are censorship or obstruction in using social media sites other than the agreement provided by the host/company.
I think the main problem is data security: what happens to the information that we put there and how can we protect privacy.
Government periodically blocking them. People censoring their own posts.
SOPA, PIPA. Obstacles: Poverty and little relevance to the majority of people.
At some workplaces, like my own, use of social media sites on the general network is restricted. I am however able to use because I have my own internet connection.
Am not really aware of any form of censorship on the use of social media in my country, Nigeria. Rather as a media literate person, I try to practice and promote some degree of self-censorship as regards the type of content posted on social media sites. On the part of the sites themselves, there is often some age limit restrictions and sanctions placed on certain types of content that can be posted on the sites. Generally I think the development of social media is a good development if only for the fact that these sites have given voice to the voiceless and people who do not have media access due to hegemonic pressures of the market and oppressive/repressive systems. I don't mind being on the vanguard of anti-censorship moves against social media.
Corporate management by site owners (FB, Twitter, etc). Governmental controls. Employer internet access controls.
I have not come across any censorship or obstacle. The main obstacle is personal. Lack of knowledge to know, for example, how to operate Facebook.
The high cost of accessing the Internet limits its use.
International law, national law, privacy statement and company compliance rules and my own values. We use well thought through Social Media Guidelines to keep ourselves compliant.
No, on the contrary. When there is lack of respect, in some discussions, the users taking part in the debate call for greater respect. It's like a kind of collective restriction. But as for censorship, no. It seems top me there is a counter-information struggle on the part of some Powers, a kind of "being everywhere reinforcing our idea or message" but no direct censorship.
No censorship in the literal meaning of the word; I do feel secondary censorship because of the policy of ict and media companies, due to what they decide to send you because of the profiles they generate and use and of the rating, advertising etc. that follows from that. And due to privacy policies that are not protecting the user, but used in favor of what is needed for commercial gains.
privacy concerns, data mining, security of women's users
Some work places don't allow their staff members to access social networking sites considering it a waste of time/ a distraction. My work places still allows- we use these tools for our own communication. In that regard when your work/site is open for public review you have too watch out for comments - while there could be interesting comments and feedback some could be destructive to the company image.
Media in our country are strongly censored both in the production phase and in distribution.

Permissions are mandated when we produce anything in the open. The process of gaining permissions is terribly corrupt. In the process of posting much of what is produced on websites includes removal of any corporate identification.
In Turkey You tube, not always available
I am concerned about some terms and conditions of using online services that allow the owner companies to access, process and exploit my personal data as well as the content of my social network site such as FB profile
Users must be aware of using the privacy settings to their advantage.
No censorship yet, except for obscene content.
Our office has an open DNS blocking system and an untangle software that blocks SNS. Reporting systems on SNS sites re malicious content is also in place.
The network is too low in our region so that connection becomes difficult sometimes. The lack of permanent electricity doesn't allow us to be connected to social medias when our correspondents are ready to communicate with us.
I am not aware of major censorship issues. But surveillance gathering by the state could be a 'hidden obstruction' to the use of social media sites.
Different countries censor various sites, there is "bandwidth censorship" and issues around net neutrality.... best source of info on this is the Electronic Frontier Foundation
I have never come across censorship, but I think social media networks are the end of privacy of individuals and for that reason I don't use them much and I have decided not to have an account on any site.
So far, here in Hong Kong, not much censorship is being ensured or implemented. Downloading is okay as long as you do not access anything that is illegal or that violates anti-piracy laws. The only worry is the policies being implemented by social media sites without proper consultation with their users/consumers.
There are no problems of censorship in my case, but attacks and lies to discredit people are a problem.
I know about government restrictions.
Administrative censorship by the government. self-censorship by media houses
Yes, there is censorship and self-censorship. Above all, much manipulation and intoxication.
My awareness has to do with privacy. I do not appreciate being over run by emails. I use my computer out of necessity.
For now I have not encountered censorship of social networks used to promote causes. However, with the restrictions being announced in our countries it is latent and a threat we are facing. But it's also true that we have to promote more democratisation of social networks and bring them to marginalised communities who are excluded. We have to provide more tools to which poor people can have access.
I have written two books on this subject, so it is difficult to summarize in 300 words. See <i>TV and Religion: The Shaping of Faith Values and Culture</i> . The most serious obstruction to media use is that governments have failed to create the laws necessary for media to be open and balanced. These laws should require licensing media to users in ways that compel them to make media open to all. The spectrum should remain controlled by democratic principles, and never sold. Fairness doctrine and the right of reply in the case of personal attack should be reinstated. Time should be made available free for every national candidate, thus ending the enormous race for funds. Time should also be allocated for children's programming, educational TV, news and analysis. This leads to the second obstruction, namely control of the media by a few multinational corporations. Corporations should not be considered persons. Monopoly or oligarchy ownership of media should not be allowed. The agency that regulates media should have sufficient funds to regulate successfully given these objectives.

I'm aware of the controversies around "Real Name" policies on G+ and Facebook.
Some companies block it from their employees, or have limited access; some countries also block sites altogether.
In the use of social media, you open yourself to the public especially in terms of private life. In some countries where you have a problem with regular interruptions of your internet facility, you may lose out on some very vital issues.
My employer blocks most social media sites.
I am only worried they sell my private information.
SOPA
The need constantly to subscribe to games or deliveries to continue using a social network and the resending chains.

Question 8: What potential do social media have for the promotion of peace in your country and why?

Answer Options	Response Count
<i>answered question</i>	127
<i>skipped question</i>	29

<p>Social media have great potential to promote either peace or conflict in the country. Unlike the other mainstream media where only the dominant group's voices are heard, the social media provide the platform where voices from different corners can be heard. If and when different voices and opinions are given space instead of being sidelined, it will lead the way to a more tolerant and peaceful society. There is still a long way to go, but the social media if put to proper use can surely lead the way to a better and just society</p>
<p>Social media are very important in Brazil, especially because this is a powerful space to share information about ONGs, protests, social movements that traditional media do not show or support. Despite this I am not sure about its real potential. I realize that this space is very important as a new possibility to broadcast information and strengthening the networks in the continental country. But considering that the links in social media are due to personal and individual interests, the information probably does not reach groups without interest in social and political issues. So, I think there are a potential to connect people and strengthen causes, but it is only one more way to do this; not the unique. The traditional way of mobilization is still necessary.</p>
<p>Very limited. They are mostly used by Young people and they are not interested in such themes, except working on a focused campaign.</p>
<p>Very high potential especially after the stream of revolutions starts by using the social media tools and followed by the rise of violence in some of the Arab countries that needs promoting peace.</p>
<p>Social media used to foster political participation and organizational activities amongst active groups. In promoting peace, and social coexistence social media may well facilitate exchange of information, sharing views, mobilizing somehow; yet only when coupled with direct face to face encounters I believe strong socio-technical system can flourish and work and exert political capacity.</p>
<p>As a tool of communication they are really a very valid field of dialogue, exchanging thoughts, exchanging opinions and promoting ideas. This fact helped in a lot of cases together with the availability of using photos and movies in establishing peace and in conflict resolution. But at the same time in other cases it caused conflicts and unrest. It all depends on who is using</p>

them.
Can contribute to re-affirming shared values of tolerance, peaceful coexistence, equal value of all people, equal opportunities etc.
More used for entertainment than for peace promotion.
There is great potential for the social media to promote peace as they promoted revolution
Social media like blogs, Facebook and Twitter do have huge potential for promoting peace in my country. Blogs especially have a huge role to play as alternative means of media and communication. Traditional forms of the media cannot report on peace because of the kind of news-worthy reporting it does.
Potential for both peace and war. It is a neutral tool and can be used or abused.
The social media have great potential for the promotion of peace because most youths are heavy users.
Advocacy campaigns, networking
Social media have immense potential when it comes to promoting peace in my country. This is solely based on the fact that most parts of the country have coverage of either one of the social media infrastructure. This makes it easy for information to reach a larger population within a short period of time. To add to this, peace messages can easily be composed on one social media site and transmitted to the rest since they are all integrated in some way.
By information and dialogue.
Many a Kenyan reacts to information they get from the social media. If the information is positive, it has a positive effect on the citizens and the reverse is true. Social media have therefore embraced peace awareness campaigns which have impacted greatly in reconciling Kenyans after the post election violence on 2007/08.
High, because everyone is there, as Zerkenbug said, its the new city
I have yet to see this happen but it has happened in other countries. In Taiwan, social media has been effective in rallying help for relief efforts after Typhoon Morakot. So, I would think that promotion of peace via social media is also possible.
Low: people use social media for social and family contact.
A great deal. Network is good in most places; IT is popular and moderately widespread however still rural communities have little or now access, likewise up-countryt/rural schools which don't have electricity, let alone IT equipment. With use of network-enabled phones this potential is increasing fast.
In Brazil social networks are growing, mainly Facebook and the potential for promoting peace via NGOs and committed and aware people is quite high. Much is happening but a lot more is possible.
Beyond promoting peace in Peru social networks are very active in defending social, environmental and political rights, freedom of expression and the press, and to denounce abuses.
The potential is very minimal especially because less than 5% of the population is computer literate and has easy access to social media.
High esp younger generation
Raise awareness of issues
In Peru the potential for setting up a platform to promoter and defend peace is high and to develop a campaign for a culture of peace because this subject is latent in our history given that we went through 20 years of terrorism which is embedded in the country's collective memory. But young people don't remember much of what we lived through... the pain is still present as well as internal wounds...after so much killing in the country on the part of the terrorist group Sendero Luminoso.

It can allow access to information not included in corporate media. I use it to share peace journalism media I create.
I live in the U.S., so this is not as much of an issue as it is in other regions.
For any kind of action - peace or otherwise - it provides a quick and wide way to distribute information and an interactive way of developing ideas and plans.
There many ways social sites could be used to promote peace in my country. For example by using them to report on tensions; or to warn people to keep off certain places; or for sending calls for help for people in distress etc. Unfortunately social sites can be used and indeed in my country they have been used to fuel chaos and conflict. This happens when hate messages are sent out and graphical and raw content that flare up peoples emotions or when used to advance partisan interests as has been the case in the past. Although Kenya has very many citizen journalists using these social sites most of them have no ideas of any ethical standards for information sharing. Social sites will remain a big threat to peace unless users become more responsible in the content they share. In Kenya for example mobile phone penetration is almost at saturation level meaning that over 90% of the population that can possibly own a phone have one. Courtesy of media convergence, mobile phone users can have access to social sites which means that if social sites could be used for peace related messages then such information could be received far and wide. Furthermore it is the young people who have greatest access to social media and they are the same ones who need to hear the messages of peace (and the politicians) because of their role and responsibility for peace building. The potential of social media in Kenya is great. Internet penetration is at about 10.5 million (out of 40m) but only about 4.5m use it regularly the rest are only occasional users e.g. for filling their tax returns so social media potential in Kenya is far from being realised.
Social Media have huge potential for promotion of peace because many people have been connected to social media and they use frequently. This means peace messages can easily reach many people on social media. Also people can be easily mobilized on social media to take peaceful actions.
Social media have a limited potential in promoting peace in the country because majority of the population, especially in the rural areas, don't have access to the internet. It however has a strong potential in linking students, intellectuals, and workers who can facilitate people's empowerment through effective information for advocacy
Great potential because social networks are easily accessible, but messages must be entertaining and compete with lots of other messages also vying for our attention.
It's complicated, because the most things that show in the net are from other countries, but I think that there is a lot of good material.
Usually, users tend to attack rather than use for the promotion of peace. All the same, I believe if it is use properly and with education, it will be an effective instrument.
Very significant potential. They are being used more and more for this effort, both in terms of providing an opportunity to witness to the Christian conviction that involvement in the world is important and specific, and also in terms of organizing "interest groups." I have recently written about this in the Yale Divinity School magazine.
Social media plays a vital role in the promotion of peace because of its transparency and can easily reach to people of any corruption happening in political, social and even in religious. social media is the best way to connect to each other and get support for any cause for the justice. E.g. there was a reconcile program for the insurgency group inorganized by peace mission it so happened that before the program there was huge demand for peace from the public through the social media. That gave the organizer more confidence and support from public to have a dialogue among the insurgent group.

It is increasing in importance since more and more people use the media
Social media can help activists link together and especially promote their causes, including peace. I am made aware of many campaigns that way, though I tend to learn about many more through email.
Social media provide a powerful organizing tool for grassroots movements of excluded social groups, can promote and organize advocacy agendas and can quickly get the word out to local and international allies about specific conflicts and human rights abuses.
Social media provide platform for citizen based conversation. That brings down tensions between different social groups.
Very high potential because it is being used by the youth. Social media can be used to spread peaceful messages. Manage alarmist information spread by leaders keen on spreading hatred. Reach a large number of young people using the lowest cost possible.
There is great potential, but the subject of peace is very manipulated by groups that don't want true and lasting peace based on social justice and on the primacy of rights.
Not applicable
There is a potential to raise awareness and action through Facebook at special events because of a very high percentage of the population on Facebook.
Social media open opportunities to explore the unknown and reduce the fear about differences. People of all nationalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina create a common platform, thus decreasing the social distance, which is forced by recent ethnic cleansing during the 1990s. Social media plays an important role on making users more sensitive to issues of each other, by enabling people from diverse backgrounds to easily connect and share their ideas, which are very similar. In that way, they identify easier with each other and since they are similar, they have more chance to like each other. People also feel safe to explore others from a distance, without fear. In that way, social media serve as a starting point for friendships which would otherwise been defined as risky. There are also lot of groups promoting peace between the former Yugoslav countries and ethnicities. The physical distance between people created by force is challenged with help of social media.
It's a platform for friends and love ones to share ideas or thoughts. Through these sites we get educated by colleagues on many subjects. It's a platform for uncensored debate unlike conventional media where editorial policy is used to regulate thoughts.
It has every opportunity to communicate and share ideas with others, also advice and encourage friends the importance of maintaining peace.
Possible potential in the future, though little evidence of these media being used to promote peace as yet.
Overwhelming majority of those who use social media sites are the youth and therefore an important vehicle to reach out to future adults, decision makers and opinion makers of society.
Youth are improving their relationships and this reduces violence.
High: they are a powerful communication tool to the extent that they support other communication and action strategies that help construct links of commitment (going beyond "I like").
Very little. People will read it (so maybe it does raise some awareness) but hardly anyone will ACT e.g. write a letter to their political rep to urge for change or vote to NOT start a war ... People are too distracted by the entertainment industries/media and too busy competing in the capitalist rat race. Sad to say but I think that people do not really care about things beyond their immediate environments.
I think that social networks can fulfil an important role in themed campaigns and can treat the subject of peace very well like other social themes. But everything has to be well organised, with a good slogan and a discourse that captures the interest and willingness to participate as

well as accompanying it with a good multimedia intervention with images, sound, videos and Youtube, supported by a basic document, interventions in meetings and conferences, etc. If you want real impact, there has to be a well organised campaign unless it is to become just one more initiative lost among a hundred others.
Through it we can promote and communicate for peace across borders
Internet connectivity is rapidly increasing in Uganda and with emergence of smart phones, young people have frequent access.
A lot: many marches and social events have been created via social networks.
This is a possibility not used enough
No limits, except that the majority of people don't have access. Your question seems to imply that there are no other means than so-called "social media"?
Generally it allows for sharing of information on issues people need to know about. Misinformation can easily be corrected. It allows for a lot of interaction.
War situations come from repressed and frustrated drives. When we provide vents for these drives, a lot of tensions go down and provide for deeper mutual human understanding. Social media provide such vents. They also provide an avenue for counter-hegemonic influences for the 'other persons' to promote their own counter-culture thereby creating a healthier society where ideas and concepts fight for supremacy. This is because we all know that those who control the media are in the driving seat of society and oppress those who don't have access, especially in this 21st century information age.
In Chile there is great use of social networks (Twitter and Facebook) to promote social causes and promote concrete actions that call on social movements, such as Students for improving the quality of education, women's movements, and regional movements. I don't know of specific uses to promote peace.
None, I have not seen social action that results in reforms....it takes more attention away from issues and pacifies the populous far more than it rallies people.
Many possibilities. I live in a country where there are many Internet cabins everywhere. Disadvantages are that in the provinces and local districts 1) Internet connections are low, 2) the people who own the cabins don't buy the best bandwidth, 3) the Internet is used to play games which makes it even slower. In the capital city, it's different: high bandwidth allows greater speed, and there is wireless Internet in several places.
They can influence the taking of decisions.
We already have peace in our country. Social media are however used to bring news of all sorts. The social community has a self-correcting effect like in real-life, but at a much later stage because of apparent anonymity.
People are aware of social media. It will be good if we can promote this kind of media for the sake of peace.
There is potential in sharing information and activities rapidly between many people united by a common relationship or interest.
High potential.
It has a lot of potential. Most of the youths prefer the social media to regular e-mails. This has become their best means of connecting and informing. The older age group is gradually shifting to this means of communication. However, from every indication, the social media will dominate the next 10 years. This could therefore be an excellent means of promoting the values of peace in my country Cameroon.
Peace is fortunately not in danger in my county, but social media help to raise awareness for all kind of topics that people are involved in. Thus, they help or can help form a total new way of "public debate".
In my country there are broad possibilities because there is wide usage of social networks and

<p>people easily express themselves about social and political happenings that quickly become mediatised via social networks. Argentineans express what they are feeling and their emotions via social networks. In addition we circulate many things: we join causes linked to human rights (disappearances and people trafficking), gender violence and ways of being in solidarity.</p>
<p>They do have potential if they are used for dialogical communication, to inform, share, think together, be a platform etc. The majority of the sites however are polemical debate and do not truly offer possibilities to really think together. On the other hand there are initiatives that do really try to use the medium as “thinking together”.</p>
<p>Very high.</p>
<p>As more people communicate through social media there could be increased communication and sharing of ideas. If meaningful work can be initiated using social media people from different ethnic groups, class and ages could join. The effectiveness is in the way you reach out - often themes with music, drama, films and food brings out youngsters. While these are the main attractions we could make them get involved in work for good causes.</p>
<p>Very high!</p>
<p>The potential is vast and unrestricted. Government monitoring and crackdowns on activist movements put all who are involved in advocacy at risk.</p>
<p>I think that social networks can rapidly diffuse proposals, actions, etc. although that same facility makes those that receive them “weak”. Only their relationship with the real world, with faces and concrete situations makes them stronger and capable of transforming.</p>
<p>Strong possibilities.</p>
<p>Facebook actions help to raise awareness amongst citizens. For example recent protests against ACTA were coordinated via FB. Also YouTube is a good way of spreading information that does not hit the mainstream news.</p>
<p>I live in Geneva and my hometown is Manila. Social media sites are widely used and accepted in the Philippines for primarily building relations and for keeping in touch, I think in most provinces, people know it but rarely have an account because they don’t have access to computers, the web, etc. Unless you are a student or professional, then the chances are higher. Nevertheless, I am aware that concerned individuals, public institutions, private enterprises and NGOs use the platforms to promote their causes in a fast and affordable way. However, clearly the extent of their reach are limited to the following 1) their spheres of influence/network; 2) aware and interested in their cause; 3) active users of Facebook, etc.</p>
<p>Great potential in Nepal as we are already using the social media for peace and other causes, including fundraising for the needy. Diaspora community has been most savvy users.</p>
<p>It can create awareness about cultural differences and similarities and acceptance of these differences and knowing the commonalities that lead to respecting individual choices and rights that may eventually usher in peace.</p>
<p>Very much since a large number of users are committed to peace making issues and reconciliation.</p>
<p>In our country, social media are used in towns only because there is no connexion to internet in the villages. I hope that social media can help rural remote areas men and women to learn much on peace and conflict transformations in one side from good lessons and practices learnt from other sides of the region and from the world. On the other hand, we are in a post-conflict period. Social media can help people belonging to different opinions to share information and make them renew friendship and confidence.</p>
<p>I don’t think any. We are in peace. But still, according to research you cannot change people’s minds on social media, only find people who think alike.</p>
<p>Social media break down the monopoly of the 3 traditional and mainstream media oligarchies</p>

<p>in the Philippines which are tied up to various industrial and capital interests. Social media are now a tool for people's mobilization and demonstration (in the virtual world or in the parliament of the streets). The fanning out of instantaneous information to the broadest possible public draws instantaneous people's responses, thus, social media are a forceful catalyst of change and are becoming a firewall against corruption and abuse by government.</p>
<p>Lots! And already there is evidence that social media have been important in resisting certain kinds of government action</p>
<p>As far as I have been able to investigate, no social network serves to promote any kind of campaign.</p>
<p>Many possibilities, above all in Peru where the majority of communication media are right-wing and attack all contrary positions. That's why it's much more important to join social networks, not to confront but to promote peace.</p>
<p>As it has become an almost steady part of the people's lives, it will be good to use social media sites in sending out immediately calls for action or urgent action alert should violations or problem situations happen. Through these sites, although not necessarily very crucial, we can start communication exchanges with other groups not only in our own countries but with other parts of the world to call for solidarity and support in our campaigns for peace, may they be specific or general.</p>
<p>In China? Internally, it is more a question of promoting conflict, some of which the country certainly needs if it is ever to right the horrendous wrongs that are part of daily life. Internationally, social media sites are often more virulently nationalist than the most nationalist official media.</p>
<p>In Chile there is a high percentage of people, especially young people and motivated adolescents, who use social platforms to send messages and coordinate actions.</p>
<p>In the USA many of my students and colleagues have been doing so and use is growing, as it should.</p>
<p>There is every possibility. But there are no serious organised platforms at the state level; those that exist operate at the sectoral level.</p>
<p>There is an overwhelming amount in other countries but very little to do with Canadian indigenous issues</p>
<p>It has a future. However, the majority of social networks among Young people and adults are used to create friendships, almost none to promote social causes like the search for peace, confronting gender violence and providing free education of quality. But we have to work more so that social networks are linked to social work.</p>
<p>They can set an issue in the agenda, but not more than that. Peace must be built on action basis, not Internet.</p>
<p>The possibilities are many because users can Access and diffuse all the good information that is healthy and necessary.</p>
<p>I work in the area of justice and peace both in the USA and globally. Social media have an enormous impact on the way I communicate, increasing distribution many times over.</p>
<p>We have many possibilities. We use Facebook to diffuse the campaign "A Deal for a Good Deal". They are used to tell people about events, for contact with adolescents and society in general. Debates take place on political themes like corruption, etc.</p>
<p>Very important. Peace remedy should always be visible. Negotiation must be seen as the only way. Violence is easy but it will be the solution to anything difficult to solve.</p>
<p>Social media play an important role to share information and to aid formation of youth generations. In this way they can help promotion of peace.</p>
<p>Very high</p>
<p>I understand that the incidence is very little and sporadic. Campaigns on environmental</p>

themes have not led to the desired results. In the same way, themes involving peace do not create the same awareness generated in social and group meetings (face to face).
Given the present political situation, none of the above has very much chance of success. I believe the place to start in the USA is with re-establishing the Fairness Doctrine, requiring TV and Cable stations to provide free time for candidates, providing adequate funding to the FCC and forbidding Congress to sell parts of the spectrum. This requires lobbying far beyond the capabilities of the WACC. However, the WACC could generate a coalition of national organizations to start the process of media reform.
Spreading the word of events/movements/initiatives because it can reach a broad audience quickly.
It is a wonderful tool in the promotion of peace. Considering the number of persons who access the social media, you may send peace messages as well as open and facilitate conversations aimed at promoting peace.
Very much. Most of NGOs are having Facebook profile so that information is shared very quickly. It is also important that many young people are on social networks, so it is very easy to inform, educate and empower them for peace work.
A great deal.
I'm not sure if social media can bring about peace. You don't meet people from different countries online you just communicate with people you already know.
My country is not currently in any conflict that would need Promotion of peace, even though it's commitment to peace is high. Social networks are able to connect many people at high speed and this makes the communication impact much greater.
Debatable.
Online activism contributes to awareness raising, however only to a very limited degree to actual sustained behavior change (if not supported by other environmental factors)
It is important and valid. Now you can publish various kinds of message and they arrive. About peace I have read very little, but there are many experiences.

Question 9: In your country what ethical questions are raised by social media platforms?

Answer Options	Response Count
<i>answered question</i>	126
<i>skipped question</i>	30

Ethical questions on corruption, gender, Tribals' Right to Self determination, Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), racism/tribalism, poverty, development versus Human/Tribal Rights etc are raised in the social media platforms.
The use companies make of social media like Facebook to get information about the personal information and preferences of job candidates is one of the serious ethics questions we face in Brazil. Other is the use of social media has in the electoral campaigns. In this moment, the government is deciding rules for the mayor elections, in next October. Basically, these questions involve notions about public and private. On other hand, there are discussions about copyrights in sharing music, images and intellectual and artistic products that have not come to solutions yet.
They are questions that are purely commercial, musical and artistic. There are no others except those put about by NGO campaigns, churches and others.

All ethical questions in social media now are around the topics of “democracy and human rights” “Corruption” “Stop abuse and Violence” “Arab identity and social movements”
Children’s exposure to risks; women’s exposure to harassment; hate speech and non progressive communities structuring around not-so-visible networks
Privacy/security; is social media space a public or a private space? Is it a legitimate space for social activism?
It was mainly about religions... which is right and which is wrong ... exchanging accusations and apologetic replies...what is OK to be done and what is not...etc... it is also about humanism ... stories from all over the world ... how to help with sickness, poverty.. ignorance...discriminationracism ...etc in the last two years ..there are a lot of talks about politics... freedom .. civil society... revolutions... civil disobedience... democracy ... constitute ... etc
Privacy / data security: How is data stored in social media being exploited commercially? Are the providers of social media services making sure that criminals and states cannot access private data? Are users aware of all that they are disclosing about themselves?
Yes , regarding the privacy protection
Ethical questions raised by social media platforms include: 1. Are we being spied on and is information about us being sold to businesses? 2. Do people put forth false information as part of propaganda and mislead the public? 3. Are such sites turning into a platform for fist fights? 4. Is it correct for the government to dictate terms to such sites? 5. What is the way of determining the authenticity of news published in such sites? 6. Are children the target of abusers in such platforms?
Privacy, cyber terrorism, people use it to track and abuse you if they have personal scores to pick with you. It is a potential danger for those tracking peoples financial means to steal credit card info and other such details that they impersonate.
Respect for privacy rights.
Who speaks for whom. Data and other privacy concerns. Are we really building community, long-term?
Most questions raised on social media sites concern issues of leadership and governance. Media form the best platform when it comes to addressing such issues. Questions on corruption have also been raised and for people to be accountable of their actions. A number of other ethical questions raised include; factors affecting women e.g. female genital mutilation, responsible behavior when it comes to spread of HIV/AIDS, proper use of technology in all fields especially food industry where there has always been the debate about genetically modified organisms.
Content of information aired on the media. Role of politicians in social and economic development.
Plagiarism and abuse of people in power
Privacy issues has become a double edged sword. On the one hand, personal letters or messages can be leaked unknowingly. On the other hand, incidents such as taking a photo of friends that inadvertently featured a stranger passing by and posting it on social media platform can get you in trouble if that stranger wants to make a big deal.
Their censorship or not by the State.
Pornography, homophobia, respect for life, respect for nature, including animals.
One of the subjects that generates most complaints and is condemned by social network users is discrimination. There are intense campaigns against people and groups that discriminate for reasons of race, gender, religion, political opinion and sexual choice, among others. Social networks are also used as a counterpoise to media monopolies to denounce

false information, as spaces to diffuse information and news that the press ignores.
Raise awareness of issues Petitions have caused policy changes
The use of the media to promote crime (e.g. 2011 riots); use of social media to defy media injunctions (sharing information that mainstream media has been barred from sharing
Uganda consists largely of people with strong religious and cultural beliefs and certain aspects of life like homosexual practices are still a very new phenomenon and the majority of people as well as the government are very negative about such practices. Therefore sharing such western practices on social media discourages people from using social media
Lack of verification and attribution of information, taking photos or quotes out of context, posting graphic content
How much information is too much? What self-disclosure should be encouraged/discouraged, especially for minors? How can socially responsible or redemptive content get higher ratings and/or more promotion than videos with irresponsible or detrimental content--and how do you democratize the rating process and promote values such as tolerance rather than sensationalism? There are so many ethical issues that it is impossible to name them all.
There are quite a few ethical issues raised. I believe they are fairly well known, dealing with identity revelation, the use of personal identity for advertising and other purposes, and the danger to young people of revealing too much of their social activities that could influence prospective employers, etc.
Facebook is being actively used to monitor people that police and intelligence authorities believe are involved in criminal and political activities. Individual users can also violate the privacy of others by revealing their activities without their consent. Other authorities, like school officials, have also been using Facebook to monitor students.
Mostly related to privacy, security, gender justice and the use of personal information for commercial gain by big companies.
Use of social media sites by under age. Security of users. False messages going viral.
Illegal telephone tapping by State organisations of [political opponents, a phenomenon that has recently increased.
Particularly the issue of privacy.
Privacy issues.
The role of religion in the recent war and post-war society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also whether or not religion should be learned early in primary school, or not at all. Ethical issue of existing segregation along ethnic lines in Schools. "Two schools under one roof" refers to the schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina based on the ethnic segregation of children. Children from two ethnic groups attend classes in the same building, but physically separated from each other and taught separate curriculums. Disrespect of cultural diversities. Existing risks related to free internet access by minors and content they share publicly. From this, another question is being raised, namely what kind of child upbringing is the best? Media bias. Hate speech in media.
Misuse for commercial ends
Privacy issues.
It is more of getting too much attention and time from the youth which might affect their studies. Other concerns would be common cyber crimes like fraud.
Tension between public and private. Respect for privacy. Author's rights. Gender perspective of content. Veracity of information: question of journalistic ethics also applies to such platforms.
From the treatment of First Nations, immigrants (in particular ppl of colour), women, the poor to participation in 'NATO wars', torture, ecological issues, environmental justice, social justice ... it is not a matter of not knowing but a lack of action.

There is not much discussion of the theme at the level of public opinion, but groups specialising in communication rights have pointed to problems of security and privacy, as also data retention for commercial purposes, which can be a serious problem for maintaining confidentiality in communications and could lead to the violation of fundamental communication rights. But people in general don't have much information on the theme. In this sense, the media ought to take a more critical attitude and open up the debate.
Use of the network for aggressive abuse of others; sending pornographic materials
Personal morals, political debates on war
There are issues of abuse of the platforms. Some of the information shared is not verified. Gossip and false information are deliberately posted on the various platforms
Too much freedom for self expression; promotion of what some would consider lewd and pornographic material; children and students spending too much time on social media sites at the expense of studying their books; and, the fear of increasing homogenization of global/western culture, etc.
Defence of human rights; opposition to the right-wing government of Sebastian Piñera; defence of nature (opposition to the construction of dams in Patagonia); women's rights; rejection of discrimination on the grounds of sex, race or sexual preference; defence of free public education of quality.
I have concern for easy access for all
Exactly that question: Are people assuaging their conscience, thus shirking their role in civil society, through a click rather than a meaningful action or relationship?
Transparency.
Mostly national and international politics. We also participate in issues raised by other countries. We are ethical aware.
Misuse of information - sexual use
Mainly situations regarding boys, girls, adolescents and their public exposure.
Questions of privacy vis a vis privacy legislation and corporate access to private information of individuals using social media.
Of all the ethical questions raised, one stands out - the uncensored nature of this media which allows a huge space for pornography and its attending vices to thrive.
Justice; truth; participation in order to change things; solidarity; denunciation of corruption.
See above; there are some sights which do offer people to gather around issues of ethical questions of media behavior and ict developments. The majority of the population however is not aware of these problems. Even churches use them for their own goal and do not go further than "how to use them" courses or handbooks, without bringing up the broad scope of ethical issues, or encouraging dialogical use.
Cyberstalking, privacy violations,
There is some factions who would consider themselves 'Sinhala' or 'Tamil' and in there forums discuss in a biased manner. Talk of the end of the 30 year war as if it were a victory of the Sinhala and so on. Some Social Media platforms further the spirit of Buddhism in a manner that segregates themselves as elite.
Credibility only
The most conservative groups are those that at the moment make the most "militant" and aggressive use of social networks in campaigns like abortion, insecurity and tougher penalties, lowering the age of being criminally guilty, etc. Other ethical themes that appear: ecology, tolerance/acceptance of what is different, responsible consumerism.
Security.
Those related to the following: need for government transparency, corruption in various

sectors especially in the agricultural, educational, infrastructure sectors
The impact of media on peace building and conflict transformation
There is no control and any one can start a love or hate campaign against some body or something for whatever interest may that be... this is complex issue that has not been answered by the growing social network sites
Using it in a way that lessens the dignity of a person and putting them at risk, especially children, as people with bad intentions look for personal information and commit cyberspace and real crimes.
Intrusion of privacy; child pornography and sex trades (abuse); hate-groups & movements that promote hatred between different ethnicities /cultures; changed / changing representations of reality.
If this question means what are ethical questions hounding social media platforms--- Unlike mainstream journalism, fact checking is a lowered industry standard in social media platforms. Privacy and security issues are also ethical questions, especially in a country where human rights violations are being perpetrated by the Philippine state. If the question means what ethics are promoted/raised to a higher level by social media platforms--- Social media platforms contribute to raising the bar on public accountability, transparency, pluralism, and most importantly, mainstreaming of marginalized voices.
The most important one is the waste of time. Especially children and young people need to learn not to sit at computers all day. There are ethical issues of publishing private information and photos. On my Facebook site I don't name people in photos just in case this might embarrass them. Twitter can set off rumours at high speed that are not always true. There are also issues of publishing indecent, violent or criminal material and issues of copyright and plagiarism for students. There are laws banning these acts but social media makes them easier to commit anyway.
I guess it is more of the overuse and abuse of the social media platforms. Hong Kong is a consumer society and somehow values and principles are lost in the promotion of a very consumerist, individualistic and apathetic culture within the social media sites.
Privacy, truthfulness
The ethical implications of "human flesh search engines" have not, to my knowledge, ever been properly resolved.
Verbal aggression against people (at the personal level). Students' movements (equal access to good education). Respect for sexual diversity.
All types but especially access issues.
Rights to intimacy, authorship, political instrumentalization
Denouncing corruption, social and moral injustice.
Mainly related with copyrights infringements, illegal downloading, etc.
That they don't violate the fundamental Rights of people especially those under age.
My biggest concern is that of accountability and transparency of individuals and organizations posting on Facebook, etc.
Violence; corruption; abortion.
Confidentiality
Right now it's all about privacy and how employers and schools are trying to encroach on personal social media sites to find out stuff about people. It is of utmost concern to see how Facebook, Google are using personal information that is on these sites. Right now, I don't use any social media accounts. I'm so sick of all of them!
Issues around privacy
Peace, use of violence, women, issues of pro-choice/pro-life, sexuality etc.,

There are concerns about strangers accessing your personal information and using it to steal with identity (using buying items in your name, etc.) Some people have been fired for posting nasty comments about their boss on Facebook or Twitter.

Argentina: human Rights; animal Rights; violence against women; mistreatment of infants; environment.

Use of social media to advertise commercial products but not really looking like adverts. I believe that the boundaries between advertising and normal human interaction is becoming impossible to discern.

Avoiding the publication of photos of children, since they are used for pornography.

Radio Television Digital News Association: Social Media and Blogging Guidelines

Social media and blogs are important elements of journalism. They narrow the distance between journalists and the public. They encourage lively, immediate and spirited discussion. They can be vital news-gathering and news-delivery tools. As a journalist you should uphold the same professional and ethical standards of fairness, accuracy, truthfulness, transparency and independence when using social media as you do on air and on all digital news platforms.

Truth and Fairness

- Social media comments and postings should meet the same standards of fairness, accuracy and attribution that you apply to your on-air or digital platforms.
- Information gleaned online should be confirmed just as you must confirm scanner traffic or phone tips before reporting them. If you cannot independently confirm critical information, reveal your sources; tell the public how you know what you know and what you cannot confirm. Don't stop there. Keep seeking confirmation. This guideline is the same for covering breaking news on station websites as on the air. You should not leave the public "hanging." Lead the public to completeness and understanding.
- Twitter's character limits and immediacy are not excuses for inaccuracy and unfairness.
- Remember that social media postings live on as online archives. Correct and clarify mistakes, whether they are factual mistakes or mistakes of omission.

When using content from blogs or social media, ask critical questions such as:

What is the source of the video or photograph? Who wrote the comment and what was the motivation for posting it?

Does the source have the legal right to the material posted? Did that person take the photograph or capture the video?

Has the photograph or video been manipulated? Have we checked to see if the metadata attached to the image reveals that it has been altered?

Social networks typically offer a "privacy" setting, so users can choose not to have their photographs or thoughts in front of the uninvited public. Capturing material from a public Facebook site is different from prying behind a password-protected wall posing as a friend. When considering whether to access "private" content, journalists should apply the same RTDNA guidelines recommended for undercover journalism. Ask:

- Does the poster have a 'reasonable expectation' of privacy?
- Is this a story of great significance?
- Is there any other way to get the information?
- Are you willing to disclose your methods and reasoning?
- What are your journalistic motivations?

Questions for the Newsroom:

What protocols does your newsroom have to correct mistakes on social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook?

Does your newsroom have a process for copyediting and oversight of the content posted on social media sites? What decision-making process do you go through before you post?

What protocols do you have for checking the truthfulness of photographs or video that you find on Facebook, YouTube or photo-sharing sites? Have you contacted the photographer? Can you

see the unedited video or raw photograph file? Does the image or video make sense when compared to the facts of the story?

Who in the newsroom is charged with confirming information gleaned from social media sites?

Accountability and Transparency

- You should not write anonymously or use an avatar or username that cloaks your real identity on newsroom or personal websites. You are responsible for everything you say. Commenting or blogging anonymously compromises this core principle.
- Be especially careful when you are writing, Tweeting or blogging about a topic that you or your newsroom covers. Editorializing about a topic or person can reveal your personal feelings. Biased comments could be used in a court of law to demonstrate a predisposition, or even malicious intent, in a libel action against the news organization, even for an unrelated story.
- Just as you keep distance between your station's advertising and journalism divisions, you should not use social media to promote business or personal interests without disclosing that relationship to the public. Sponsored links should be clearly labeled, not cloaked as journalistic content.

Image and Reputation

Remember that what's posted online is open to the public (even if you consider it to be private). Personal and professional lives merge online. Newsroom employees should recognize that even though their comments may seem to be in their "private space," their words become direct extensions of their news organizations. Search engines and social mapping sites can locate their posts and link the writers' names to their employers.

There are journalistic reasons to connect with people online, even if you cover them, but consider whom you "friend" on sites like Facebook or "follow" on Twitter. You may believe that online "friends" are different from other friends in your life, but the public may not always see it that way. For example, be prepared to publicly explain why you show up as a "friend" on a politician's website. Inspect your "friends" list regularly to look for conflicts with those who become newsmakers.

Be especially careful when registering for social network sites. Pay attention to how the public may interpret Facebook information that describes your relationship status, age, sexual preference and political or religious views. These descriptors can hold loaded meanings and affect viewer perception.

Keep in mind that when you join an online group, the public may perceive that you support that group. Be prepared to justify your membership.

Avoid posting photos or any other content on any website, blog, social network or video/photo sharing website that might embarrass you or undermine your journalistic credibility. Keep this in mind, even if you are posting on what you believe to be a "private" or password-protected site. Consider this when allowing others to take pictures of you at social gatherings. When you work for a journalism organization, you represent that organization on and off the clock. The same standards apply for journalists who work on air or off air.

Bloggers and journalists who use social media often engage readers in a lively give-and-take of ideas. Never insult or disparage readers. Try to create a respectful, informed dialogue while avoiding personal attacks.

The guidelines were created through RTDNF's Journalism Ethics Project sponsored by a generous grant from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism.

http://www.rtdna.org/pages/media_items/social-media-and-blogging-guidelines1915.php