PILOT CURRICULUM

MEDIA WISE: EMPOWERING RESPONSIBLE RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

MEDIA AND INFORMATION FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS

KAICIID

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DIALOGUE CENTRE

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INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR INTERRELIGIOUS AND
INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

PILOT TRAINING
MEDIA AND INFORMATION FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS

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INTRODUCTION: HOW TO USE THIS MIL CURRICULUM FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS

The media landscape has changed dramatically over the past 25 years. The news media, websites and content on social media play an increasingly important role in shaping perceptions toward other religions and cultures. KAICIID is working to connect the news media with another group that has a tangible impact on peoples' perceptions of the Other: religious leaders. The curriculum, which is an adaptation of UNESCO's MIL Curriculum for Teachers as well as UNESCO's Media and Information Literacy Policy and Strategy Guidelines, will empower religious leaders to navigate the news media and the Internet with confidence and more capably address misinformation or bias about their own or other religious communities and beliefs. It allows them to understand and deal with contemporary events, challenges and issues in a way that is responsible, informed and effective.

Media and information literacy (MIL) concerns the role and function of media and other information providers in our personal lives and in society, and is an important skill set for religious leaders. It is a fundamental tool for allowing religious leaders to understand and address the events and challenges of our age in a way that is informed, responsible and effective. It encourages the evaluation of media and other information providers based on how they are produced, the messages being conveyed, and the intended audience. It promotes individuals' ability to communicate and express, and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas.

In an information and knowledge-based society:

- MIL is important for citizens' participation in society and survival

- Media and information are central to decision-making within government and society

- Media and other information providers are instrumental in shaping perceptions, beliefs and attitudes

- There is an increase in user-generated content, the use of virtual spaces, and citizens' journalism.

By bringing together the fields of 'media' and 'information' literacy, the MIL curriculum presents a holistic approach to literacy that is necessary for life and work today. This curriculum recognizes the need for an expanded definition of literacy, one that includes print, screen-based and electronic media and information systems.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

Religious leaders, like other members of society, are influenced by and through the media. While they may have expertise on their traditions, they are not necessarily media experts or experts on other religious traditions. It is therefore critical that religious leaders, who play a teaching and guiding role in their communities, are able to critically analyze information and news media content, understand risks and opportunities associated with the Internet, and become responsible and informed consumers and transmitters of information and opinion.

For religious leaders, as for other people, the news media and the Internet provide a window to the rest of the world. They provide tremendous opportunities, but also carry some risks—and media and information literacy helps religious leaders take advantage of the opportunities while safely navigating the risks.

In the quickly-evolving world of the news media and the Internet, individuals have access to:

- **More information.** In many ways, people are more informed than ever before. On the other hand, individuals must be able to critically assess the quality of news and information they are receiving.

- **More news and opinion.** The news media explain current events and other issues of public interest through news reports and opinion. In today's world, people have access to many mainstream news media, and the spread of new and alternative media — including religious media — means that individuals can find news about almost any niche issue, presented from any number of perspectives.
  On the other hand, it is important that individuals be able to distinguish fact from opinion, know how to find the reliable information about issues of concern, and understand how language is used to create certain emotional responses. Religious leaders should be able to consume the news media in a responsible and informed way, so that they can provide responsible and informed guidance within their communities.

- **More online contact.** Today's Internet technology, including websites, blogs and social media platforms, provides countless opportunities to reach out and connect with others, whether that means people close by or on the other side of the world. However, this increased contact also poses risks for community members, particularly youth. It is crucial that religious leaders are able to recognize and respond to groups or individuals that are using the Internet to promote stereotypes, espouse radicalism or hatred, or even call for violence. Religious leaders must be empowered to address negative messages.

There are risks and opportunities that religious leaders should understand. Religious leaders play the role of teachers, advisers and role models within their communities. They are often

seen as the "voice" of their communities. By becoming media and information literate, they help their communtiies to have a clearer understanding of the world, and are also empowered to better represent their communities to the world.

Religious leaders who have been trained with this MIL curriculum should have a basic understanding of how journalists and news outlets work, should understand how social media works, and should be better able to answer the following questions:

Is a particular article based on fact or opinion? How can you differentiate between factual reporting and opinion? How can you recognize a hate website? Is a particular group or website using language that is meant to manipulate emotions in a certain way, and why might they be doing so? If you find a group or website that is speaking hatred about your own community or about another community, what is the appropriate or effective response? How can you identify and find the information that you need about a certain issue? How can religious leaders positively correct misunderstandings, reach out to their neighbours, and counteract inaccurate perceptions about religion or religious communities?

It is KAICIID's fervent belief that media and information literacy is an invaluable skill set for religious leaders in the 21st century, and KAICIID's hope that this curriculum will help to meet this need.

MAIN FEATURES OF THE MIL CURRICULUM

Media and information literacy seeks to combine disciplines that were once separate and distinct. This curriculum is concerned with the knowledge and understanding of the functions of media and other information providers, how they operate, how they convey messages and values, how they can be used, and how to critically evaluate the information they present.

The MIL Curriculum has been developed with a non-prescriptive approach, and with adaptation for different groups of religious leaders and leaders working with confessional youth in mind. It is presented in the form of modules.

The modules in this curriculum document include all or some of the following sections:

- **Background and rationale**

- **Key topics**

- **Learning objectives**

- **Sample activities**

- **Assessment recommendations**

- **Resources**

The **learning objectives** identify the key goals of each of the modules for religious leaders. They also identify the skills and knowledge that religious leaders should be able to demonstrate after completing each module.

The **background and rationale** section explores the topic of the module for trainers, outlining and describing content and context. It is important to note that the commentary is not intended to be exhaustive, but is meant to illustrate the possible considerations and directions that trainers might explore.

The same can be said for the **sample activities** that have been included. These have been developed to illustrate the many ways in which the skills and knowledge acquired in each module can be demonstrated. Trainers are encouraged to use these as a basis to prepare more locally or culturally relevant activities.

The section on **assessment recommendations** includes suggestions for formative and summative assessment. These recommendations are meant to highlight possibilities for assessment, which include assessment for learning, assessment of learning, and assessment as learning. Finally, some modules conclude with a section of **resources** that have been recommended for use with the modules.Trainers may find they have their own local resources which they would like to add to this list.

INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

The following strategies for integrating the MIL Curriculum are offered for consideration:

- Stand-alone course: The MIL Curriculum can be offered as a stand-alone course for credit(s). It can be offered as a mandatory or optional course for all religioous leaders. In training or as part of a continuing education programme.

- Institute approach: This involves a one or two week, face-to-face intensive training of trainers or religious leaders, possibly carried out by theological institutes, media institutes, interreligious dialogue orgnaizations or religious organizations.

- Multi-components integration: Different components of the MIL Curriculum can be integrated into various related courses. It is especially recommended to supplement and support training in Interreligious Dialogue.

- Teachers and Youth Workers: Teachers and youth workers in religious institutions and schools will benefit from this training when dealing with interreligious and intercultural issues. Additionally, youth workers in non-formal educational environments such as ethics and civic education programmes with an interreligious and or intercultrual compenent could also benefit from the training.

- Online course: The course could be offered online for religious leaders in training or those currently practicing:

    This could include partnership with another institution in or outside the respective country. It is important to note that the training institution would not have to set up its own online course, but could partner with another university that has facilities in place for offering online courses. The institution may consider offering the course as a certificate, diploma or degree programme.

In the long term, a combination of two or more of these strategies could also be explored. The adaptation process and integration strategies employed will vary from institution to institution.

MODULE 1

INFORMED RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP THROUGH MIL

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The rapid growth of media[1] and information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the attendant convergence of communication and information make it imperative that media and information literacy (MIL) be seen as vital to the empowerment of people. MIL has become an important prerequisite for harnessing ICTs for education and fostering equitable access to information and knowledge. The societies in which we live today are driven by information and knowledge.

We cannot escape the ubiquity of media and all forms of information and communication technologies and the role that they play in our personal, economic, political and social lives. Clearly, then, new forms of competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) are required for people, including religious leaders and members of religious communities, to effectively participate and succeed throughout all stages of life in the information and knowledge societies. This has led to the creation of a specific media and information literacy curriculum designed for the leaders of religious communities.

Members of faith communities have a right and need to access reliable information and a diverse array of opinions.

Members of faith communities have a right and need to access reliable information and a diverse array of opinions, just as all other people in any society. Access to information and opinion is critical not only in order for people to participate in decision-making processes, but to be informed about and thus better communicate with the Other, whether that is members of other faith communities or secular communities.

According to the most recent statistics of the *ITU (International Telecommunication Union)* 3 billion (3/4) of the world's 1.7 billion households, representing 4.9 billion people, have a television; 0.6 billion (1/3) of all households, representing 1.9 billion people, have access to a computer, and 4.6 billion mobile phone subscriptions were projected by the

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1   For the purpose of this curriculum, irrespective of the nature and technologies used, media are defined as a source of credible information provided through an editorial process determined by journalistic values and attributable to an organization or a legal person. To the extent that media are an important part of every society's communication system, their institutional make-up can mesh with a variety of non-media information providers, such as libraries, museums, archives, Internet information providers, other information organizations and citizens who produce their own content.

end of 2009. Added to this there are over 2.5 billion radio receivers. The World Association of Newspapers reports paid-newspaper readership worldwide to be in excess of 1.4 billion in 2007. The UNESCO Institute of Statistics estimates that close to 1 million new books are published annually in the world.

When taken together, the number of television and radio stations, newspapers, cell phones, and access to and use of the Internet, determine much of what we learn about ourselves, our country, our cultures and the world around us.

Media and information literacy offers a necessary set of competencies for the 21st century. Media and other information providers are central to societal participation, good governance, and interreligious understanding. They serve both as a platform for public discourse and communication with and about the Other, and as providers of information and knowledge.

Therefore, citizens need to understand how to use media critically, knowing how to interpret the information that they receive, including the use of metaphors, irony, and the way that stories and events are framed to suggest certain meanings. Citizens, including religious leaders, need specific competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) to engage with the media, and ultimately with society, their political processes and governance, and to effectively use resources provided by media and other information providers.

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In many aspects, traditional literacy has been redefined. It is no longer sufficient for people to only learn reading, writing and arithmetic. While the importance of these fundamental numeracy and literacy skills cannot be overestimated, media and information literacy is required for community leaders to understand the functions of media and other information providers and seek, evaluate, use and create information to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals.

This module is built on three pillars: critical thinking, self-expression and participation. It will consider MIL as relevant to and overlapping with a variety of disciplines/fields, and will explore such questions as:

- **What is information? What are media?**
- **Why are they important?**
- **What is media literacy?**
- **What is information literacy?**
- **Why media and information literacy?**
- **Why media and information literacy an important first step to understanding and ultimately enganging with the other?**

The curriculum will broadly introduce religious and other community leaders to key issues and concepts of the field, which will be dealt with in more detail in other modules. The aim is for religious and community leaders themselves to become media and information literate.

> **Because religious leaders help shape the way their community members perceive Other, it is important that religious leaders are able to critically analyze sources of media and information.**

Because religious leaders help shape the way their community members perceive society, government and the Other, and even direct their community to sources of information or opinion, it is important that religious leaders are able to critically analyze sources of media and information.

UNIT 1
UNDERSTANDING MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY: AN ORIENTATION FOR RELIGIOUS LEADERS (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Defining 'information' and 'media'

- Exploring the importance of the media and other information providers

- Describing key learning outcomes of media and information literacy

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this module religious leaders should be able to:

- Identify key learning outcomes/elements of media and information literacy

- Understand media and information literacy, and its importance and relevance

- Explore the roles of media and other information providers on the Internet

- Explore these roles in a variety of media and information texts

MULTIPLE ROLES OF MEDIA

Media and other information providers play a central role in information and communication processes. They are one way of communicating information, although their role is much broader than that. For the purpose of the MIL curriculum, media are defined (irrespective of the nature and technologies used) as sources of information created through an editorial process determined by journalistic values.

Editorial accountability can be attributed to a specific organization or a legal person. To the extent that media are an important part of every society's communication system, their institutional make-up can mesh with a variety of non-media information providers, such as libraries, museums, archives, Internet information providers, other information organizations and citizens who produce their own content.

Media play several roles. They:

- act as channels of information and knowledge through which citizens communicate with each other and make informed decisions

- facilitate informed debates between diverse social actors

- provide us with much of what we learn about the world beyond our immediate experience

- are means by which a society learns about itself and builds a sense of community

- function as a watchdog of government in all its forms, promoting transparency in public life and public scrutiny of those with power through exposing corruption, maladministration and corporate wrong-doing

- are essential facilitators of informed social participation

- are a vehicle for cultural expression and cultural cohesion within and between nations

- function as an advocate and social actor in its own right while respecting pluralistic values[1]

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1   Adapted from UNESCO MDIs

SOURCING INFORMATION

The proper use of information made available by media and various information providers depends on people's abilities to understand their information needs, and to locate, retrieve and evaluate the quality of the information they can access. Today, there is an extremely wide and diverse selection of information material, content, and resources available, particularly on the Internet, varying greatly in accuracy, reliability, and value. In addition, this information exists in a variety of forms (e.g. as text, image or statistic, electronically or in print), that can be made available through online repositories and portals, virtual and real libraries and documentary collections, databases, archives, museums, etc. The most important factor, however, is that the quality of this information can range from 'very good' to 'very bad'.

> **The most important factor, however, is that the quality of this information can range from 'very good' to 'very bad'.**

Before evaluating information sources, it is important to think about what the information is for. This will help you to identify credible information sources. The key questions might be: What source or what kind of source would be the most credible for providing information in this particular case? Which sources are likely to be fair, objective, lacking hidden motives, showing quality control?

We can think of information as being held by media and other information providers, including on the Internet. These information providers have a number of roles, including to:

- inform

- educate

- facilitate teaching and learning processes

- provide access to all types of information (often free of charge, plural, reliable and without restrictions)

- serve as a gateway to information

- promote universal values and civil rights

- serve as society's collective memory

- gather information

- preserve cultural heritage

- entertain

However, not all sources of information are equally good, and some sources may drive a certain narrative or agenda and content that appears to be factual may in fact be based on opinion or misinformation. Additionally, facts and statistics can be used selectively in order to support a specific viewpoint or drive a certain agenda. This process may or may not be the result of a conscious decision on the part of the information provider.

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ACTIVITIES

1. **Survey the media to find resources or media texts that are examples of the functions listed above. Identify texts that illustrate these roles on a local, national and global level.**

2. **Imagine that you wake up one day and there are no more media, libraries, Internet and cell phones. In addition, all newspapers, magazines, radio stations and TV channels have disappeared.**
   Analyze in small groups what would happen to citizens:

   - How would they be informed now?
   - How would they communicate news, facts, and events?
   - What would happen with the decisions you usually make?
   - What would you – personally – miss most in such a situation?
   - What would society lose with this kind of problem?

3. **The media play an important role in helping to encourage social cohesion by providing accurate information about the Other, and representing their voices. Discuss how external pressure, either from government, business or other interests that might be imposed on media can prevent the media from exercising this function. Think about the content of media in your country. How many different points of view can you find on religious issues and from what perspectives?**

4. **What is public domain information? What public domain information affects religious communities? Debate the adequacy (or lack thereof) of information provided by these institutions.**

5. **Make a list of media that are present in the daily lives of people, including members of religious communities, today.**

    - What are the key roles and functions that each of these media perform?
    - What do you think it means to be 'literate' when it comes to using the media and other information providers?
    - What knowledge, skills and attitudes are necessary?

6. **Keep a journal for one day in which you record your daily use and interaction with media and information providers, such as public and private Internet in formation providers.**

    - What patterns emerge in your personal use?
    - How many hours do you spend engaged with media and technology such as the Internet, television or radio?
    - What roles are these media and other information providers playing in your life?

7. **Write an essay with your conclusions on the value of the media for influencing cultural expression and cultural cohesion.**

IMPORTANCE OF MIL FOR CITIZENS

Media and information literacy (MIL) brings together disciplines that were once separate and distinct. MIL is concerned with giving people an understanding of the importance of media and other information providers in order to:

a) **make informed decisions**
b) **learn about the world around them**
c) **build a sense of community**
d) **maintain public discourse, and**
e) **engage in lifelong learning**

Further, MIL should spur citizens to become active producers of information and innovators of media and information products, as well as critical thinkers. MIL should incite them to use new and traditional media for self-expression, creativity and greater participation in society and the global information network, including through interactions with and learning about members of other religious communities.

ACTIVITIES

1.   **How do the goals of MIL (listed above) affect religious communities?**

UNIT 2
MIL AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Functions of media and the Internet

- What citizens should expect from media and other information providers

- MIL and its importance to citizenship and social participation

- Freedom of expression, editorial independence of media, plurality and diversity in media and other information providers

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- understand and describe the functions of media and other information providers as these relate to access to information and knowledge, self expression, and participation in society

- identify the conditions needed for media and other information providers to perform those functions

FUNCTIONS OF JOURNALISM AND MEDIA

Journalism and media sources are important in every society. Without journalists and the news media, there would be no 'window on the world'— we would have little way of knowing in the world beyond our immediate experience.

> **Without journalists and the news media, there would be no window on the world.**

There are several key factors that journalistic practices should respect, and that citizens have come to expect of journalism:

- **Organizing knowledge**

  making chaotic information organized and comprehensible, and going behind official positions to uncover special interests

- **Truthfulness**

  in the media, sources of information should be clearly stated so that citizens can judge relevance, reliability and potential biases; important unanswered questions should be noted with an expectation of a follow up if controversy exists

- **Public interest**

  in the work they do, journalists can do much to further the public interest by equipping citizens with the information they need to take part in public affairs

  - Independence – it should be clear that the citizen debate should take place over and above personal biases; commentators must examine 'both sides of the coin' (i.e. discuss ideas they both agree and disagree with); and journalists must show independent thinking in their work

  - Forum for public criticism and problem solving – the media should offer several channels for public interaction (letters, e-mail, phone contact or public forum); citizens also expect that the media give them access to space or airtime to allow conversations in their own 'language' with fellow citizens; further, they expect that a broad representation of views and values is visible in news coverage

  - Accountability – the media should monitor all those who exercise power, not only governments, but also important public and private bodies; by holding the powerful to account, the media can inform community thinking

  - Proportional and relevant news – citizens have a need for timely knowledge of important issues and trends; reports should not overstate or understate the true nature of threats and risks

  - Balancing privacy and the right to know – citizens expect media professionals to balance the public right to know with the personal right to privacy (cf. Fackson Banda, UNESCO, 2009).

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The role of media and other information providers is changing with the rapid spread of technologies, such as information and communication technologies (ICTs). ICTs provide access to information and knowledge almost instantaneously. Media and information providers, such as libraries, archives and the Internet, are able to provide new services and are

becoming more than just resource centres or information providers. These new possibilities offer new opportunities for effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of citizens for life-long learning, research and entertainment, and for connecting communities.

These new possibilities offer new opportunities for effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of citizens for life-long learning, research and entertainment, and for connecting communities.

Access to information is essential for a healthy society. Free speech and access to public information are crucial for responsible citizenship. Media and other information providers exist to ensure access to information for each citizen.

Media and information providers have several key functions, which include:

- providing open access to information resources without any racial, gender, occupational and religious restrictions; public libraries, in particular, provide access free of charge

- protecting readers' privacy and confidentiality in terms of content consulted on the premises or online

- providing access to diverse and plural information resources, based on professionalism and without political, religious or moral bias

- collecting and preserving information for future generations

Despite journalists' efforts to be objective and factual while reporting stories about religion and different religious groups, there is no such thing as a news story without a point of view. Every news story is influenced by the attitudes and backgrounds of the reporters, photographers and editors who select and edit the images and information they offer.
It is important that individuals and groups take action against inaccurate representations.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Review media contents with your group and ask them to identify news items and stories that strike them as a misrepresentation of their religion or community, or of another religion or religious community.**

Discuss the following courses of action with the group:

- If it is a news story or an opinion piece in the mainstream media, ask the group to write a letter to the editor explaining their position and why they think such information will not enhance social inclusion.
Keep it short and simple.

- If it is information from other sources like advertising and marketing, depicting a section of the community in a stereotypical way, ask the group to discuss how to voice their opinion to the industry (advertising practioners council, public relations council, etc) and the company whose products and services are being advertised.

- Discuss with the group how to contact the newspaper or magazine the ad appeared in, and the company that owns the publication. Emphasize the need to enclose a copy of the "offending" advertisement.

- If the information contains hate speech, etc., discuss with the group how to get in touch with a media advocacy or rights group.

- Review with the group how to give positive feedback when the media provides positive and socially responsible information.

- Trainees may write a short essay arguing that readers have an obligation to approach the news with an open mind and not just to reinforce their existing opinions.

2. **Select coverage of a local issue or story about a religious community or interreligious relations and examine it closely.**

Part of being media and information literate is having the awareness of, and the ability, to apply the above criteria to the coverage that various issues receive. To what extent were citizens' expectations being met in the local example? What impact did the coverage have on the local community? Where citizens' expectations were not being met, what recourse did citizens have to address problems? What roles can media and information literacy play in supporting citizens?

- Do you agree that the well informed citizen is better equipped to make decisions and to participate in society, including interacting with other faith communities or society in general? Why? Write an editorial expressing your opinion.

- Discuss: How is the role of information viewed and valued in your society? What do you think is the relationship between information and knowledge and between information and power?

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE, PLURALITY AND DIVERSITY

Freedom of information and expression underpin media and information literacy. In this context, the use of the related term freedom of information refers to access to public information. 'Information is key to our understanding of the world around us, our ability to find a meaningful role in it, and our capacity to take advantage of the resources available to us. When information is concentrated in the hands of a few or only in the hands of elites, the public's ability both to make decisions and to assess the decisions is greatly reduced. An ethical and pluralistic media can ensure transparency, accountability and the rule of law.' (UNESCO Freedom of Expression Tool Kit). Independent media draw their power from reporting responsibly on the communities they serve.

Information is key to our understanding of the world around us, our ability to find a meaningful role in it, and our capacity to take advantage of the resources available to us

UNESCO Freedom of Expression Tool Kit

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESS

Freedom of expression is the freedom to express and exchange views and opinions without fear of threats or punitive action. Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right recognized in multiple international declarations and other agreements. The right to freedom of expression protects not only freedom of speech but any act of seeking, receiving and imparting information or ideas, regardless of the medium used.

Freedom of the press is a necessary underpinning of this right as it enables free expression to be public and shared, and is thus essential to the building and supporting of communities and civil society. Freedom of expression can promote a true sense of ownership within society by allowing ordinary individuals to examine and express different thoughts and opinions. Freedom of expression is an integral part of civic responsibility, and essential for critical thinking. Restrictions to freedom of expression are allowed under international law only when such restrictions are necessary to protect the freedoms of others. Limitations, such as the laws preventing 'hate speech', should be narrowly defined to avoid misuse.

MEDIA PLURALISM

A pluralistic media sector – one that crosses media platforms (print, broadcast, online), locale (national, provincial and community) and political perspectives – helps societies to better reflect on themselves. When media operation is dispersed into many hands, opinions that are not popular can often still find a forum. An effective mix of international, national and local media outlets can give people the means to participate in society. The widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources contributes to people's welfare. While separately owned newspapers and broadcasters generally criticize each other's content, the concentration of media under common ownership is far from offering mutual criticism and could lead to promotional or advocacy media.

An effective mix of international, national and local media outlets can give people the means to participate in society.

EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

Editorial independence refers to the professional freedom entrusted to editors to make editorial decisions without interference from the owners of the media or any other state or non-state actors, including interest groups. Editorial independence is tested, for instance, when a media organization runs articles that may be unpopular with its owners or advertisers.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Discuss why it is important for religious citizens to have access to a wide array of news media that present many different perspectives, in order to promote social participation and understanding between different religious or cultural communities.**

2. **Using the Internet, research the ownership and control of today's major media companies and government monopolies.**
   - List their major holdings
     What impact might this ownership have on access, choice and freedom of expression?
   - Research the laws that are in place in your country or community to regulate media ownership and control

3. **Assess the role of alternative or independent media in your community.**
   - Select one example, and describe the key ingredients that make it independent.
   - In what ways does it allow people to participate in the society and government?
   - In what ways is it different from mainstream media?

UNIT 3
INTERACTING WITH MEDIA AND THE INTERNET (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- How media communicate meaning

- The issue of representation: how media and other information providers present information, people, cultures, religions, images, places, etc.

- The role of users, citizens and audiences

- Engaging with media through production of user-generated content

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- understand and describe the key concepts that are used by media and other information providers

- understand how knowledge of these concepts will help users/citizens to critically interact with media and other information providers

HOW MEDIA CONVEY MEANING

A key part of media literacy is understanding how the media construct different types of stories, how they shape information in presenting it, and what techniques they use to organize material that otherwise would be chaotic and difficult to understand. It is important to have a basic understanding of the different techniques employed by the media, the 'codes' they use and how to interpret them. It may also be relevant to consider who is producing and arranging the material and how active or interactive the consumers of media and information are – whether their own perceptions affect the way information is presented.

In relation to MIL, the following key areas should be examined closely in order to understand how media and other information providers operate, how they convey meaning, how they can be used, and how the information being presented can be evaluated. The following areas also underpin later modules in this MIL curriculum document:

LANGUAGES IN MEDIA AND INFORMATION

- How do producers of a media text use different techniques or ways of representing different kinds of information to communicate?

- How are these uses identified and accepted by the general public?

- What are the codes and conventions or the 'key ingredients' or grammar of a particular medium?

- A media commentator, Marshall McLuhan, wrote that '𝐸̂𝑖𝐸‰𝐸𝑦 𝑄̂± ‰%𝐸̂𝑖𝐸‰𝐸 › 𝑉ᵇ𝐸'[1], meaning that the medium itself – print, broadcast, Internet – affects the way we understand the world. How does the choice of media influence the kind of information we receive? How does this shape the message conveyed through the media?

REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA AND INFORMATION

- Examine media images or representations of religion and religious communities

- Analyze image or media text

- Analyze the context

- Who benefits from the acceptance of media representations and who loses?

- How do these images influence the way we see ourselves and others?

- How do they influence our knowledge and understanding of the world beyond our immediate experience?

- How do they influence our view of other religious communities and beliefs?

- Examine to what extent the editorial independence is reflected in the media text

PRODUCTION/USER-GENERATED CONTENT

- Notions of human agency are important here – who is creating the media and information text and why?

- Connects to rights of communication and expression for the citizen and the professional

- Connects to freedom of expression, religious freedom, active citizenship and media and information literacy

- Resources (human, financial, technological, etc.) and regulations are considered here

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1   McLuhan & Fiore 1967. The Medium is the Message: An Inventory of Effects. Penguin Modern Classics.

CITIZENS AS USERS/CONSUMERS OF INFORMATION PROVIDER SERVICES

- How information providers select information resources and major selection criteria

- How information providers, including public and private Internet information providers, are funded

- How information providers generate income from information services

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK OF A MEDIA TEXT

- What is the purpose of this sample media/information text?

- How is this produced?

- Who created it?

- Who is the intended audience? How do you know?

- What is the main message?

- Who benefits and what do they gain?

KEY QUESTIONS FOR FINDING INFORMATION

- What are my information needs?

- How can I identify and define this need?

- Does the information I need exist in the form I need it? If not what action can I take?

- How to understand, organize and assess the information found?

- How can I present this information in usable formats?

- How can I preserve, store and reuse, record and archive information?

ACTIVITIES

1. **Select a media and information text of your choice that includes a religious dimension.** This could be a story on the internal affairs of a religious community, religious minorities in a society or conflict that has a religious dimension. Apply the key questions listed   above. What can you learn about media production and industries, the messages being conveyed, as well as the intended audience?

2. **Think about leading a project in your local community.** Write this down. Apply the key questions above starting with, 'what are your information needs?'

3. **In small group discussions, review a news item or an email to any member of the group.** Look at the news or information as stories. This provides a useful context for further analysis. With this approach, news or information moves from the sheltered and protected domain where it is seen as a reflection of reality to where it can be seen as a construction or representation of partial reality that comes to us replete with codes and a cast of characters – both stereotypical and non-stereotypical.

   Ask the following questions:

   - What kinds of themes and characters are in the story (news/information)?

   - What was the hoped for outcome by including these themes and characters in the news/information?

   - How does the point of view of the person or character telling the story affect us or our community?

   This will help you determine the following:

   - The source of the information

   - The purpose of the information

   - Whether the information in factual, reliable, etc

   - How widespread was the information – was it targeted at a particular individual, group or community?

4. **Write down all the activities you do during a day, from the moment you wake up in the morning until you go back to bed at night.** Analyze in small groups: do you need information to participate in these activities? Write down next to each activity the information you need. For example you need to know the temperature outside in order to get dressed; you need to know the traffic situation before you take the bus; you need to know about the economy in order to know if you are going to ask for a loan. Discuss: how important is information in your daily life? How many decisionswould you have difficulty making without information?

MODULE 2

UNDERSTANDING THE NEWS, MEDIA AND

INFORMATION ETHICS

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BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

With the advent of the new information and communication technologies, the reach and impact of traditional media (radio, television and newspaper) have been multiplied, and information and news have thus become more widely available than ever before. In this information age, journalists, information professionals and the news media (new and old) play a central role in providing us with access to information beyond our immediate experience, and in facilitating citizen participation in good governance and stable societies.

> **Journalists, information professionals and the news media (new and old) play a central role in providing us with access to information beyond our immediate experience.**

This module will explore the role and function of news media (new and traditional) and other information providers in our personal lives and in our societies and communities. Topics will include infoethics, and citizenship, requiring and promoting transparency and accountability, and building civic responsibility. It will also give an overview of the news media's evolving role, from serving merely as a mirror of society to being a gatekeeper of information, a watchdog with a check-and-balance function, enabler of public debate, and facilitator of citizen participation.

The module will enable religious leaders to explore such issues as the importance of accuracy, accountability and transparency in news reporting, as well as the role of freedom of information and freedom of expression in the international media.

Thanks to new technologies, we are also witnessing an increase in user-generated content, such as eyewitness reports from citizens. While this phenomenon presents us with a great diversity of voices and perspectives, it also reinforces the need to critically evaluate the many sources of news and information available today. In becoming media and information literate, religious leaders will not only be able to analyse and evaluate information and the news they receive on a daily basis, but also to exercise their civic responsibility to fair and accurate news reporting, as well as an understanding of free, independent and pluralistic media.

UNIT 1
FREEDOM, ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Codes of ethics, codes of practice and global values in the newsroom: guidelines for journalists and information professionals

- Journalistic ethics in news gathering and processing (ethics committees, ombudsman, independent press councils/press complaint commissions)

- Rights and responsibilities of citizens: connecting the journalist and the citizen

- Citizen reporting and user-generated content

- Freedom of the press, freedom of expression, freedom of information and infoethics in society

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- analyze how ethics applies to the practice of journalism and information professionals at the personal, professional and global levels

- explain the corresponding rights and responsibilities of citizens as part of the loop in the practice of journalism and information professionals; and

- understand and analyze citizen reporting or the evolving role of citizens or non-professional journalists as active participants in generating media content and in the democratic process of public debate

- describe the principles of freedom of the press, freedom of expression and freedom of information, and their implications for news reporting

SELF-REGULATION

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Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *HüÉ%ɷɷÉ≠ É≤Ê %Ҍҽ2ɑÔ≤Vl@ ≠*

The media are social actors who can exert great power in society so, in order to protect their freedom, it is usually believed that journalists need to regulate themselves by adopting codes of ethical conduct or setting out professional guidelines on how stories or events should be covered.

APPLICATION – CODE OF JOURNALISTIC ETHICS

- Examine an actual code of ethics established by journalists – (one example is the code of ethics established by the International Federation of Journalists; another example would be the BBC's professional standards). Assess the intended purpose of each element of the code

- There is a broad international consensus that a code of ethics should be developed and agreed upon by the members of the profession themselves and not imposed by external agents or authorities. What do you think?

- How is journalism different from other professions, such as that of doctors, lawyers, or religious leaders, and should these professions be regulated differently?

- Discuss the mechanisms needed to enforce the code of ethics.

ACTIVITIES

1. **The religious leader will show examples of reporting that depict prejudices, including stereotyping, mythmaking and graphic images.** Religious leaders will be led through a discussion on the importance of standards and general guidelines for journalists.

2. **The religious leader examines the coverage by citizen reporting of an event or issue prominently covered by mainstream media.** He or she checks for factual errors or bias. To more easily facilitate this activity, the trainer may provide clippings or examples of citizen reporting.

3. **The religious leader reflects on the following criteria of freedom of the press in their own country.** The trainer can choose to share international press freedom reports about the local country with religious leaders.

- Degree of freedom of print, broadcast and online media (e.g. Internet)
- Legal environment for media
- Political pressures that influence reporting
- Economic factors that affect access to information
- Media ownership concentration
- Direct attacks on journalists and media
- Existence of state monopoly in media
- Existence of censorship and self-censorship in media
- Difficulties of foreign reporters

Is there a press council or media ombudsman, or any kind of self-regulatory mechanism in place in the religious leaders' home country(ies)? What kinds of stories could religious leaders bring to the attention of these bodies, and what kind of response can they expect? What impact do such councils have on media behaviour? Trainers should discuss international standards for voluntary self-regulatory press councils.

Press freedom advocates believe that the media should be free to publish any content as long as it does not violate specific narrowly defined laws. This means that the media may sometimes publish or transmit content that stereotypes, negatively portrays or that contains false or misleading information about certain people or groups. Why do advocates defend press freedom even knowing there is a risk that this will sometimes be the result? Who should decide what a stereotype is? Who decides what is or is not accurate or acceptable? From the perspective of a news consumer, what are the benefits of having a wide variety of sources of information and opinion, and what are the challenges?

PRESS FREEDOM AND OBJECTIONABLE CONTENT

Religious leaders are news consumers, but also community leaders. They are in a position to "endorse" information, or criticize it. They also transmit it to their followers. Therefore they should be thoughtful about what is or is not an example of stereotyping, profiling, defamation, incitement, or discrimination.

The media has a duty to inform. Freedom of the press, freedom of expression and freedom of information are essential for the work of the media and also important in enhancing interfaith dialogue and understanding. Press freedom limitations should be narrowly defined, for example through prohibitions on incitement to violence. Broad freedoms allow media to disseminate images, news and opinions that religious people may find offensive.

While it is evident that certain media may sometimes provide information that may create or reinforce stereotypes about religions, individuals or groups, most times journalists struggle to balance the need to inform and the desire not to be seen to be promoting hate speech, messages and images that could fan the embers of hatred, violence, and so on.

Because the media is under pressure to beat deadlines and also attract readers and viewers, sometimes journalists do not have the opportunity beyond a 15-second sound bite or a few paragraphs to explain complex news items.

Whether to report or leave out perceived "offending" information or images is a judgment call that journalists make every day and this decision may be influenced by a lot of factors: time, circumstance, the mood of the community (sometimes, people may feel that they need to know about certain tragic events, particularly if it affects them personally), the extant laws in a particular community, etc.

Because of media globalization and Internet technologies, people will be exposed to content that they deem offensive, inaccurate or inflammatory. Content created in one social or cultural context may be deemed inappropriate in another.

Nonetheless, it is important to not seek to limit freedom of the press, freedom of expression and freedom of information because these rights are necessary for media to do their job of informing society.

In small groups, discuss how freedom of expression may lead to images, news and opinions that are deemed offensive to certain groups. The media has to be free to function effectively and religious groups and individuals have the right to be protected from discrimination, hostility or violence.

4. Read and discuss UN Human Rights Council Resolution 16/18 on "Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief" (annexed). Members of the international community engaged in a long and controversial debate about the "defamation of religion," and whether religions should receive protections generally reserved for individuals. Some felt that this was important, while others argued that the protection of religion and religious symbols from "defamation" would place unacceptable restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of thought, and would open the way for government abuse. UN HRC Resolution 16/18, adopted in 2011, did not resolve this argument, but addressed an area that everyone could agree on: individuals should not face discrimination or violence as a result of their religious beliefs. There have been subsequent revisions to this resolution, and implementation processes continue through today.

What is (in religious leaders' opinions) the line after which media content can be deemed to incite violence or hatred or discrimination? What is the difference between reporting about hate speech and directly transmitting hate speech? Why would people argue for the protection of religion from "defamation"? How could such a law affect religious leaders in a positive way, and how would it affect them in a negative way? Is it important to uphold freedom of expression and press freedom even when content seems offensive or even inflammatory?

- Ask the group to think about how different media have different approaches to same story (some news media may chose to link to the clip of gruesome imagines that depict a particular religion or group in bad light) while others may refuse to do so.

- Ask the group to review a few news stories or TV clips and identify the difference and similarities, if any, of their coverage of a particular news item. See what the groups thinks about the stories or clips in terms of making a distinction between reporting on hate speech, stereotypes and actively conveying hate speech or stereotypes.

- Discuss whether it is ethical for the media to convey certain kinds of statements, and to what extent this depends on how the statement is conveyed – as a headline on the front page, or as the headline of an editorial, or just as a quotation from a politician, etc.

- Reflect on the intersection of freedom of expression and religious freedom and the need to balance freedom of religion with freedom of speech.

The media has a responsibility not to promote intolerance, negative stereotyping and violence against persons or groups based on religion or belief.

- Discuss how religious leaders can engage with the media to ensure it upholds this duty.

- Reflect on how to condemn and seek to end hate speech and negative stereotyping in the media while upholding freedom of expression.

ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Media log

- Participation in group learning activities, e.g., workshops, class discussions

TOPICS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

- Self-regulation and media ombudsman

- Reporters' rights

- Public's right to know and principles of freedom of information: Article 19

- Freedom of information/expression: International covenants, conventions, declarations and charters, and National laws (constitutional provisions; laws on libel, national security)

- Access to information laws and procedures, as well as declarations and charters, recommendations

- Ingredients that constitute a good freedom of information law and practice

UNIT 2
WHAT MAKES NEWS – EXPLORING THE CRITERIA (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Criteria in assessing news value and newsworthiness

- Considerations in making news judgements or in shaping the news

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- describe the criteria used in assessing the news value
  or worthiness of events, personsand ideas, and

- critically discuss the basic principles in making
  news judgements or in shaping the news.

WHAT JOURNALISTS DO

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Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *HüÉ%◌ⓒ≠ É≤Ê %◌ⱫⱭⱭÔ⁄≤Ⅵ◌ ≠*

Journalists need to make sense of a vast amount of information and consider how to organize it in a way that highlights the issues that are most important so it is comprehensible to an audience that will have very different levels of understanding of the events in question. The judgements involved will include selecting those stories deemed to be important (newsworthy) and deciding how to present the information. Inevitably the form of presentation (sometimes known as the 'framing') will reflect the experience and outlook of the journalists themselves. It is important for an audience to understand these framings and to think critically about them.

ACTIVITIES

1. **CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS**

   Religious leader reviews the coverage of both CNN and Al Jazeera (or other media organizations of choice/relevance) on the same topic and same day and compares and contrasts the angling (i.e. selling of a particular point of view or perspective) and treatment (i.e. information provided, sources acknowledged, interviews provided, any visual support of news stories) of the two coverages.

2. **NEWS ANALYSIS AND SELF-ASSESSMENT**

   The following lesson offers an analytical framework religious leaders can use to help them understand the process by which news is constructed.

   This framework is a practical method for helping religious leaders deconstruct news, recognizing its various components and how it is assembled. This can help them become critical thinkers and viewers as they evaluate the way the media select and filter information.

- Have the group create an itemized list of each story covered on a broadcast or in an issue of a newspaper. This is fascinating when compared to a different paper or broadcast from the same day. If it is all news, why do they not all cover the same stories, or cover them the same way?

- Have the group list stories in the order in which they appear. This could be according to the front page, the lead or opening story, etc The group intuitively knows that the most important story is up front. Comparing lead stories in newspapers and news programmes again reveals the subjective nature of this priority. Compare headlines about the same new event, and discuss how these affect the way audiences approach the news.

- Have group concentrate on the running time, the space or column inches devoted to a story. They will begin to note that some stories that do not rank as high in sequence actually rank quite high on the scope scale, especially if there is graphic footage or high levels of conflict.

- Have group evaluate each story in terms of its objectivity and see if they can identify bias: whether the story is newsworthy or not.

- Have the group discuss "sensationalism", as opposed to simply writing a gripping headline or story.

3. **Religious leaders are given two different pieces of news writing on the same subject and are asked to analyse the newsworthiness of the story, explain which piece is stronger or more informative and how the other news article could be improved**. (For criteria to be used, please refer to the points below.)

    - Timeliness
    - Impact and importance
    - Prominence
    - Proximity
    - Conflict
    - Unusual/human interest
    - Currency
    - Necessity

    He or she then analyses the stories based on the factors to be considered in making news judgements or in shaping the news. These are:

    - Truthfulness: accuracy (getting the facts right) and coherence (making sense of the facts)
    - Dedication to the public interest
    - Informing, rather than manipulating, the public
    - Completeness/comprehensiveness
    - Diversity (inclusion of news of all communities, not just targeted audiences)

    Attention should also be paid to the placement of articles, headlines and font size used, and photographs and captions included.

4. **What is "sensationalism"? On the surface, at least, the object of news is to inform the audience.** But the media are also businesses and like all businesses they have to make money to keep going. All media competition since audiences can get information from many different sources.

The factors above show that media outlets have to attract audiences – and therefore ad revenues – to survive. What this also means is that in the attempt to attract audiences (and ads), the line between sentionalism and newsworthiness is often blurred.

Sometimes the way stories that involve religious people or groups are reported may be deemed sensational, perhaps because they focus on shocking actions or images, death, disaster, tragedy, confrontation, scandal or controversy. Taken together, they affect the way that religious people view one another and even their own traditions. The way the media reports stories may have an impact on the way religious people perceive and react to each other.

- Religious leaders should review several media outlets and identify which news items about a religion or group they think are sensationalized, and why.
- The public has a right to know. Discuss the stories and whether they fall within the ambit of the public's right to know .
- Two different stories can both be newsworthy for different reasons. Select two different stories (one religious and the other sports) and discuss why they are both newsworthy.
- Review why what one group sees as newsworthy may appear as a sensational story to another group.
- Discuss the impact of sensationalism on the way religious people view or even form stereotypes about the Other.

ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Participation in group learning activities, e.g. workshops, class discussions
- Reflection paragraph based on textual analysis/contextual analysis/news analysis

TOPICS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

- News settings (socio-cultural, political, and economic influences on the news)
- Effects of news settings on news values and editorial processes
- Global flow of information and shaping of the news
- Global news media organizations (CNN, Al Jazeera, BBC, Fox News)

UNIT 3

THE NEWS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: GOING BEYOND THE 5WS AND 1H (CORE)

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KEY TOPICS

- Identifying news and recognizing the story (the news development process)

- Discipline of verification as the essence of journalism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- describe the process of how the news story is developed from story idea to data gathering to news writing

- understand the core principles of the discipline of verification, as distinguished from the journalism of assertion, and how they are applied to the news development process

- analyse how news reports can apply the techniques of verification to fulfil the journalistic standard of truthfulness and accuracy

- understand and describe the relationship among journalists, news sources, senior editors and media owners

ACTIVITIES

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

1. **The religious leader analyses newspaper accounts of a major issue or event and examines the information provided.** He or she explains the assessment, considering the factors and process in 'identifying news and recognizing the story':

    - Elements of the news (5Ws and 1H: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?) and redefining them: news is data with meaning (who is character, what is plot, where is setting, why is motivation or causation, how is narrative)

    - Journalism as 'storytelling with a purpose': finding the information people need to live their lives, and making it meaningful, relevant and engaging

2. **The religious leader will check a sample text for verifiability, based on the core principles of verification:** do not add; do not deceive the audience; be transparent as possible about methods and motives; rely on own original reporting; and exercise humility

3. **The religious leader will also apply at least one technique of verification.** Sceptical editing, accuracy checklist, method of verifying presumed facts, rules on anonymous sources, etc. (Reference: Kovach and Rosentiel, The Elements of Journalism) and discuss.

ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Textual analysis

- Participation in group learning activities, e.g. workshops, class discussions

TOPICS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

- News sources and news gathering techniques (including use of ICTs)

- Taste and appropriateness in news coverage

RESOURCES

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Rosenstiel, Tom and A. Mitchell (eds). (2003). *Ḧü¢̂®̂≤ó%̂oÊ̂Ŵ//©uᶜᶜᶜ.Ŵ̂Ê̂› %̂≤4∂Ô̂≤Ŵ̂@ Ê̂o%o %Éo¢̇ ∂̂≤°8 Ŵ̂R̂≤ó.* New York: Columbia University Press

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MODULE 3

REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA AND INFORMATION

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BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Representation in the media can take many forms. We live in an image-filled culture, and on a daily basis we are surrounded by media representations on websites, on television, in feature films, in news reporting and in books. The representation of religious communities and beliefs affects the way that those communities and their beliefs are perceived by others.

The representation of religious communities and beliefs affects the way that those communities and their beliefs are perceived by others.

Our own views of other religious communities are equally shaped by the information and opinions we receive via the media and other information sources.

Journalists and journalism support organizations have long understood the importance of the media's role in mediating reality for audiences, which is why journalism training institutions focus heavily on journalist ethics and on sensitization training. The development of « conflict sensitive journalism» is an operationalization of that understanding. Conflict-sensitive journalism emphasizes journalist ethics, knowledge and understanding, with the goal of producing reports that provide fuller explanations of the causes and potential solutions to conflict, and that cause no harm.

However, not all media content is written in a way that is totally accurate or fair. When it comes to reporting on religious communities or beliefs, the time pressures of the news cycle or a lack of training may result in reports that are less than ideal. It is therefore critical that religious leaders, who like other citizens rely on the media and other sources for information about the other, be able to critically evaluate representations in the media

Reporters, authors, videographers, advertisers, publishers and filmmakers use images, audio and written words to convey information about an event, story or issue. They usually face

limitations of time, space, resources and other editorial constraints to prepare and present stories to the public. Therefore, depending on the story being told or the message being conveyed, it is often necessary to 're-present' issues or events by referring to characteristics such as religion, race, gender, sexuality, age or class.

Inevitably, those working in the media must select the content to be presented to the public. This selection is often not void of subjectivity and sometimes leads to stereotypical or oversimplified representations, which can be used to label individuals and justify narrow beliefs or attitudes. This may or may not be the intention of the author or journalist/reporter.

Sometimes it is the interpretation of the recipient (viewer, reader or listener). Where media and other information providers become an instrument of partisanship, conflict or discrimination, it is logical that the media should be accountable for their actions like any other social actor. However, as a platform for public debate, it is crucial that the media be allowed to present discussion and information without control of any party or government.

Media and other information providers work in a social context and are social actors within that social context

We also need to understand that media and other information providers work in a social context and that they are social actors within that social context. Media are influenced by society and in turn influence society. We need to look deeper into the specific national context within which particular media operate.

In an effort to be media and information literate, we need to examine media images or representations and analyze not only the image or media text itself, but also the context which surrounds the image and which we sometimes do not see. It is important to recognize that while the media have a lot of power to direct and challenge society, they also reflect society by providing the kinds of stories and representations we demand and accept.

Many media industries in various regions have developed voluntary diversity codes, meant to ensure that media industries demonstrate a commitment to content and initiatives that are inclusive and diverse. Many media industries also follow a code of ethics that prohibits the use of abusive or discriminatory material based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, physical ability or marital status.

Key questions in this module include: who benefits from the acceptance of inappropriate media representations and who loses? How do these images influence the way we see ourselves and others? How do they influence our knowledge and understanding of the world beyond our immediate experience?

UNIT 1
NEWS REPORTING AND THE POWER OF THE IMAGE

KEY TOPICS

- Case study: news reporting

- The power of the visual

- Representation of disasters

- Representation of religion

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Analyze representations in news coverage of particular events, especially representations of religion and religious people, including their own and other communities
- Examine news reporting that offers alternative representations to those found in the mainstream media
- Assess the impact of representations on the audience and on the subject being portrayed
- Analyze representations of religion and religious people in the medial
- Because of our dependence on visual media, some media critics have expressed concern about how certain events, in particular disasters, are presented in the media. Examine media coverage of current events and issues and assess to what extent these concerns are valid.

Discuss reactions to images of people personally affected by tragedy or disaster. Research and reflect on the strategies that are used by journalists working in mainstream and alternative media to depict the emotional impact of events while maintaining people's privacy and dignity.

ACTIVITIES

Media images affect the way communities perceive one another. When it comes to religious communities, it can be difficult for people to develop an accurate understanding of other communities when much of what the media projects are images of tension and conflict.

Select a few stories that include representations of religious communities or people and determine:

- What image of religious leaders and other members of the community is portrayed by the media.
- How do these images impact on the relationship between various communities?
- Do the headlines give a balanced perspective on the activities and images of different members of the community?
- What parts of report seem accurate and nuanced, and which seem to rely on stereotypes
- Whether representation transforms assumptions about particular groups of people into "realities"
- What emotional response audience members might have to certain representations, depending on their own perspectives and experience, and how that response affects interreligious dialogue.
- Whether the groups that are portrayed have any say in how they are represented. Was anyone from that group quoted? Does the journalist's choice of representatives affect the way the group is presented?

UNIT 2
REPRESENTATION OF RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS PEOPLE IN THE NEWS (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Media representation of religion and religious people

- Coded language and terminology

- Analyzing news reports, images and symbols

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Understand visual or verbal cues that depict stereotype

- Analyze news reports about the Other

- Explore the responsible treatment of media images that are stereotypical or inaccurate.

REPRESENTATIONS OF RELIGION

Images of religion and religious people may be shaped by and may help perpetuate stereotypes. It is tempting to rely on stereotypes, because they simplify the world. However, stereotypes result in generalizations and misinformation about the group being stereotyped. They ignore the uniqueness of people or communities by painting everyone of the same religion, gender, race or nationality (etc.) with the same brush.

It's important that religious people learn to recognize and understand stereotypes in different media.

Because stereotyping can affect how people feel about themselves and how they relate to the Other, it's important that religious people learn to recognize and understand stereotypes in different media.

Religious communities and beliefs are portrayed through many kinds of stories: breaking news reports from conflict areas, political news, news about social issues, and human interest stories, among others.

Reporters for daily newspapers or news shows often have to research, write and present a story in one working day. They may not have time to present several sides of an issue. They may need a quick, convenient, pre-packaged image, and these choices may sometimes perpetuate stereotypes.

Because the news industry is under pressure to attract readers and viewers, a complex issue involving people with complex motives can be reduced to a simple conflict between the forces of "good" and those of "evil", it is important for religious communities to understand that there are many factors that go into creating media images and that negative images are not limited to their group.

It is important for religious leaders to reflect on their role in critically analyzing the images that they receive about their own and other communities the media, and think about how they can address stereotypes and misinformation.

How are religions and religious activities represented in the media? Here are some examples of the ways that religion and religious people are depicted in the media:

1. Through images (pictures). In the search for images that will attract audience the media tends to look for striking or dramatic pictures. When there is conflict, the media may show

pictures or video of the parties to the conflict in certain dress, or juxtaposed beside certain symbols, or accompanied by weapons, flags, etc. because such photos are eye-catching; however, these may not present a complete or accurate representation of the people affected by the conflict. The media may also show pictures of religious people as victims or perpetrators in ways that may influence perceptions about the Other.

2. Through coded language and terminology. The negative slant of the news means that when religion or religious people do appear in the headlines, it is often in the context of conflict, violence and death. This is achieved through the use of coded language and terminology which depict religion or religious people as "extremist," "fundamentalist," "moderate," "spiritual," "liberal," etc. The labels are used to stereotype people.

3. As a marker of identity. While religion is one marker of identity for many people, they may also have other linguistic, cultural, national, tribal or political affiliations. In stories about conflict or violence, religion is emphasized as a marker of identity over and above other affiliations, even though the basis for the conflict may not be religious, but rather have to do with political tensions, resource or land disputes or other issues.

ANALYZING & ADDRESSING REPRESENTATIONS

The following framework can help religious leaders deconstruct news about conflict that has a religious angle. It can help them become critical thinkers and viewers as they evaluate the way the media depicts religion or religious people:

- Take a news story about a conflict that has a religious angle. Identify the protagonists and antagonists? Examine if there is an ethnocentric bias.

- Discuss what the story is about, the photo choice, the language and the sources that were quoted.

- Analyze the person telling the story. Is the reporter telling the whole story? What perspective is missing? Does the story help perpetuate stereotypes?

- Review how another perspective might affect the story and help combat stereotypes.

- If it is on TV, observe the camera angle, look at the framing process and identify not j ust what is shown but what is left out, what the camera is not showing.

Ideas to help religious people and communities understand and deal with images and representation of various groups in the media.

- Start talking to your community about media stereotypes and depictions early on

- Familiarize members of your group with the concept of stereotyping (simple, one-dimensional portrayals of people, based on generalizations based on religion, gender, ethnic group, age, etc)

- Help them understand the role these generalizations play in conflict

- Teach members that sometimes these stereotypes are not deliberate but based on the perceptions of reporters and editors

- Develop media kits that can be made available to the media to better inform them about your group and its activities

- Design outreach programs targeting the Other

- Identify and highlight strong, realistic portrayals of the Other

- Provide key contacts from your group to the media for easy access to information about your activities

- Designate a spokesperson to speak for your religion or group

ACTIVITIES

1. **Class discussion:** The trainer should lead the class in a discussion about the ways that their own religious communities are portrayed in the media and through other information providers, including different types of media and in local or international media, and on social media or websites. Do religious leaders find that their communities, or certain groups within their communities (women, youth, etc.) are stereotyped in the media? What kinds of media content contain representations of their religious community (for example, breaking news, feature stories, op-eds, sports, entertainment, etc.) What kinds of images can be found of people from their communities? Are their beliefs represented (or misrepresented)? What about when it comes to reporting on different conflicts around the world? What about representations of other communities (those without representatives in the room, for example)? How do they feel about these representations, and do they feel there is anything they can do about them?

2.	Look at newspaper reports or view TV programmes from international media and analyze depictions of religion and religious people, minority groups and cultural Others.

- Ask members to think how accurately religion and religious people are portrayed in the media

- How religion and religious people and cultural Other steoreotyped in advertisements and in TV programs and movies

- Talk about how these images are limiting for religious people. Ask members to compare the images of religious people they see on TV with those they see in real life.

- Discuss how such images affect the way we view religious and cultural Other.

UNIT 3
INDUSTRY CODES ON DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION (RECOMMENDED)

KEY TOPICS

- Media codes and ethics
- Applications of codes to various media
- Assessment of codes and regulations

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Examine diversity and ethical codes for various media industries
- Apply media codes and ethics to a variety of media images and texts
- Assess media texts based on the media codes and ethics
- Assess the purpose and effectiveness of these codes
- Recommend suggestions/changes to media codes and ethics

ACTIVITIES

The need to avoid state regulation of the media has led to media industries in various regions developing voluntary diversity codes, meant to ensure that these industries demonstrate a commitment to content and initiatives that are inclusive and diverse. Many industries also follow a code of ethics that prohibits the use of abusive or discriminatory material based on race, ethnicity, age, gender, physical ability or marital status.

1. **Research the codes of practice/ethical guidelines that exist in your region. Identify who is responsible for creating these codes of practice.** Summarize the key areas that are included and explain their purpose. How do they support the interests of citizens and consumers? What effect can these regulations have on the industry?

2. **Apply the code of practice to representations in news reporting from the previous exercise.** Assess to what extent the regulations are being followed. Be sure to consider the text and the context in your assessment. Give specific examples from the coverage to support your response. In instances where reporting violates the regulations, what recourse is available to individuals? Is there a voluntary press council, broadcasting regulator or similar body in your country to which individuals have recourse, and how can these bodies be contacted? Where can one see a listing of the decisions that these voluntary self-regulatory bodies have made?

3. **Examine other areas of the media that are covered by these codes (e.g. gender portrayal in advertising).** Assess to what extent the regulations are being followed. Outline the feedback you would give to the regulatory body and/or to the producers of these media texts

ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Summary of key areas of diversity codes/ethics
- Application of these codes to various media texts
- Recommendations for changes/additions to the codes/ethics

MODULE 4

LANGUAGES IN MEDIA AND INFORMATION

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Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1900 – 44)

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

'The medium is the message', now a famous quote, was written by Marshall McLuhan in 1964. While the medium may affect how messages are received, the users'/audiences' own background or experience may also affect the interpretation of messages. An important first step in becoming media and information literate is to understand how information, ideas and meaning are communicated through and by various media and other information providers. Each medium has its own 'language' or 'grammar' that works to convey meaning in a unique way.

'Language' in this sense means the technical and symbolic ingredients or codes and conventions that media and information professionals may select and use in an effort to communicate ideas, information and knowledge. Technical codes include sound, camera angles, types of shots and lighting. They may include, for example, ominous music to communicate danger in a feature film, or high-angle camera shots to create a feeling of power in a photograph. Symbolic codes include the language, dress or actions of characters, or iconic symbols that are easily understood.

For example, a red rose may be used symbolically to convey romance, or a clenched fist may be used to communicate anger. Media languages can also include the repeated use of particular words, phrases and images, also known as verbal or visual language. When we study media languages, three main questions should be considered: How are media languages understood by media audiences? What are some of the major codes and conventions used by people working in media and information today? Another important question is whether different persons can derive dissimilar meanings from the same text or piece of information.

This module aims at training religious leaders to acquire knowledge of a variety of media languages to enable them to understand the ways in which information and messages can be conveyed and how their interpretation of information or ideas from media and other information providers can be related to the type of languages used.

UNIT 1
READING MEDIA AND INFORMATION TEXTS (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Examining codes and conventions in information texts

- Analysing meaning: – symbols and visual language

- Exploring media languages – photo and video collages

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Identify codes and conventions used to convey meaning in a variety of media and information texts

- Identify signs and symbols used for a variety of purposes in local and global communities

ACTIVITIES

1. **Identify the signs and symbols in your community that are used for a variety of purposes to convey information (e.g. for directions, locations of attractions, etc.).** Describe the verbal and visual 'languages' used in these signs and symbols so they are commonly understood by people in your community. Consider the use of font, stylized images, design, etc.

2. **Examine a variety of postcards from your country or community.** Identify the key symbolic and technical codes that are used in each. What information about your country is communicated through the use of these codes? What information is omitted? Create a postcard for a place or organization of your choice. What key technical and symbolic codes would you use to convey important information and create the desired impression?

ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Analysis of codes and conventions in a variety of texts
- Analysis of signs and symbols in the community
- Analysis and assessment of the codes used in local or national postcards
- Creation of the collage

UNIT 2
THE MEDIUM AND THE MESSAGE: PRINT AND BROADCAST NEWS (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Analysis of codes and conventions in news media

- Application of codes and conventions to a news story

- Media languages and meaning:
  assessment and analysis of news and information

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Analyze the codes and conventions used in television, radio and newspaper coverage of an event

- Apply these codes and conventions to a particular news story

- valuate the ways in which a medium and its particular codes and conventions can shape the message being conveyed

- Assess the information that can be conveyed through the use of a particular medium

ACTIVITIES

A government is planning to change legislation that will affect environmental protection. A government official has just made a speech to justify the government's position. A large group of young people are present to protest and a struggle breaks out between the protesters and the police

1. Predict how this event will be covered by a newspaper, a radio station and a television station. How do you think the coverage will differ and why? How much of this difference would be based on the unique characteristics of each medium?

2. Select a current event or issue of interest, such as a recent cultural or political or religious event, or a health issue. Working in groups, develop a news story on this event that would appear on radio, in a newspaper and on a television news programme. For the radio, the story can be no longer than 20 seconds; for the newspaper, 210 words; and for television, 1–2 minutes. After completing the stories, discuss the results using the following questions as a guide:

<div style="writing-mode: vertical">MODULE 4</div>

3. How do various media affect the kind of coverage and information that can be given?

4. What codes and conventions used in the development of each story?

5. How is this exercise an example of the phrase 'the medium is the message'?

6. Create a collage of images or symbols that could be used to promote a school or other institution, for example an interreligious organization, considering the target audience and the information being conveyed

ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Description and assessment of the kind of news coverage possible in a variety of media
- Development and analysis of a news story for radio, television and newspapers

MODULE 5

ADVERTISING (OPTIONAL)

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Advertising involves the paid use of the media (print and electronic) – in terms of time or space – to promote a message, service or product. Generally speaking, there are two types of advertising: commercial advertising; and public service announcements, sometimes called social marketing.

Commercial advertising typically involves the promotion of a person, product, service or company in order to generate sales (e.g. commercials and print ads for clothing companies, soft drinks, movies, etc.), whereas public service announcements involve the promotion of messages and services that benefit the general public (e.g. health and safety messages, literacy promotion, etc.). Both forms of advertising constitute the primary source of revenue for traditional and new media. The revenue that media and other information providers receive from advertising is used to pay for operating costs and the development of content (e.g. television programmes, website material, magazine articles, radio programmes, etc.). Without this revenue, most private media companies could not survive. It is important for the media to attract advertising revenue by offering opportunities or 'vehicles' that will appeal to advertisers and sponsors. Therefore, the media often develop content that is in public demand or that will attract various large groups of citizens. These groups may be categorized according to age, race, sex, income, political persuasion, and so on.

Advertising, in one form or another, reaches almost every corner of the globe

Advertising, in one form or another, reaches almost every corner of the globe. Companies, organizations, citizens and governments use advertising to promote products and services, and to convey information, beliefs and values. The information or messages conveyed through advertising are essential to the decision-making public. Given the prominent role

of advertising in our societies today, religious leaders should understand what goes into the creation of effective advertising and be able to evaluate advertisements as sources of information. Furthermore, it is important for teachers to learn about the mechanisms that allow citizens to provide feedback on ads to the industry and to government officials.

Advertising can have a negative effect upon the media, however. Pressure from advertisers may lead to journalists avoiding writing about controversial topics. It can drive out public - interest content in favour of entertainment that attracts a particular audience. Unless there is a clear wall between the editorial and the business sides of the media, which is less and less the case, then the business interests of the media company can impact content and news coverage without this being overt.

While advertising opportunities have expanded with the explosion of media and technology, the industry continues to be regulated by specific codes intended to help maintain public confidence. Generally speaking, these codes operate at the national level and are created by the advertising industry. The codes are designed to help ensure that advertising is truthful, fair and accurate. In many countries, advertising councils and consumer affairs groups can be contacted by consumers if they have any questions or concerns about industry practices.

Advertising today has moved beyond its traditional role. No longer confined to television commercials, magazine ads or billboards, ads for more and more products, information, messages and ideas can now be presented through pop-ups on web sites, mobile phones and other handheld devices, product placements in film and television programmes, and sponsorship agreements, as companies continue to seek new ways to bring their information to the public. Governments, politicians and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also make use of advertising strategies as they attempt to promote and gain approval for policies or programmes and, in some cases, improve their image.

Governments, politicians and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also make use of advertising strategies.

In many countries, the local private advertising base is not sufficient to sustain all the media entities that exist. Therefore, at times, media companies must also depend on advertising from foreign companies as well as the government. In addition, international companies and organizations that want to reach local audiences purchase advertising space from local media. In recent years, we have seen the emergence of 'superbrands': products or companies whose advertising and branding efforts have 'gone global'.

UNIT 1
ADVERTISING (OPTIONAL)

KEY TOPICS

- Advertising as a revenue model
- Advertising and sponsorship – location, messages and audience
- Evaluating claims and appeals in advertising

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Analyze the advertising process as a means of communicating information

- Deconstruct the key ingredients that go into an advertisement and its emotional appeal

- Assess the impact of advertising messages on specific target audiences

- Identify product placements in programmes as indirect advertising (mixing editorial and commercial content)

- Explain the reasoning behind the placement of ads during a specific programme. Assess the effectiveness of the advertising strategies used during this time frame for reaching target audiences

ACTIVITIES

1. **The primary aim of media and other information providers is to make profits.** Discuss this statement. Give arguments for and against this. Can media and other information providers operate without advertisement? What actions should be taken by citizens if media and other information providers are found to be sacrificing the public good for advertising revenue? Why should certain actions be taken?

2. **Survey a collection of magazines, view ads on television and visit a number of websites for major companies.** Describe the advertising strategies used in current examples. Select a number of ads to examine closely. Describe the 'personality' of the product featured in each ad and identify the emotions the advertiser is trying to evoke. What promises or solutions does the ad or PSA offer? How realistic are these? What views of happiness or success are being communicated?

- Identify the information, messages and values conveyed in each ad. Discuss the need for a clear distinction between editorial and advertising content. Also, are any specific claims being made in these ads? What facts are presented to support these claims? Is any of the information misleading or unclear? Based on your analysis, what recommendations would you make to the audience for this ad? In other words, would you accept the information being presented in this ad? Why or why not? Would you suggest any changes to make the information or message more accurate or complete? Explain with examples

- Select a print ad to examine closely. This exercise requires you to consider the design elements used in the ad, the information and message being conveyed, and the audience being targeted. How do the design elements (composition, angle, light, colour, choice of words, etc.) support the message and information being conveyed? In other words, how does *form* reinforce *content*?

UNIT 2

ADVERTISING AND THE POLITICAL ARENA (OPTIONAL)
KEY TOPICS

- Analysis of political and election advertising

- Evaluation of guidelines for political advertising

- Evaluation of regulatory bodies for election advertising

- Media regulations applicable during national elections

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Assess political and election advertising

- Evaluate the guidelines in place for political advertising

- Analyze emotional appeals in political and election advertising

- Recommend strategies to maintain an informed citizenship, given the use of emotional appeals in political advertising

- Explain the procedure available to citizens who wish to solicit a regulatory body during an election

ACTIVITIES

1. **Collect examples of political advertising from your country or region.** If necessary, conduct research at your local library. Analyze these ads using the guidelines from Unit 2. Consider the reasons why the average citizen would be interested in political advertising. Assess the effectiveness of each ad, considering the purpose, the information and message conveyed, and the target audience. Explain how the design/ form of the ads is used to reinforce content

2. **Examine several ads from the same political campaign.** Evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign as a whole in its use of unified graphics, images, slogans and messages

3. **Using the Internet and/or library resources, investigate the regulatory bodies put in place to monitor political advertising.** Examine the guidelines established to monitor the advertising used by political candidates during elections. Assess to what extent the ads selected adhere to these guidelines

4. **List the media regulation (established by the national election commission) on reporting elections in your country.** See whether there are guidelines for reporting opinion polls, allocating airtime by the national broadcasters to different political parties, broadcasting election results, etc.

5. **Political consultant Frank Luntz tells his political clients that '80 per cent of our life is emotion and only 20 per cent is intellect. I am much more interested in how you feel than how you think.'** Examine political advertising in light of this comment. Explain to what extent political ads are based on emotional appeal. Examine the language used to 'sell' a candidate and his or her ideas or policies. Assess whether or not the language used is accurate or misleading TP MODULE

MODULE 5

MODULE 6

NEW AND TRADITIONAL MEDIA (CORE)

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This module introduces religious leaders to the role that new and converging technologies are playing in the widening participation of citizens in social, economic and political change. It explains how new digital and electronic forms of media (online news, blogs, Wikipedia, YouTube, social networking applications, video gaming, etc.) have evolved from traditional media and how they are enabling greater access to information and knowledge (as well as freedom of expression, good governance and participation in society).

The co-existence of print media, broadcast media (radio and television), the Internet, mobile phones, etc. is also allowing media content to flow across various platforms, widening access to information and creating a participatory culture where citizens not only consume information, but actively participate in its production and distribution. New information and communication technologies (ICTs), for example, have opened up opportunities for greater audience participation in information and knowledge sharing, and are encouraging people to actively engage with their societies and others.

In effect, new media and converging technologies are creating new spaces for self- expression and participation in public discourse on a wide range of social, economic and political issues. New media platforms are allowing citizens to consciously engage in their societies, and helping to bring global news and issues much closer to local societies.

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UNIT 1
FROM TRADITIONAL MEDIA TO NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Change and continuity – a brief history of the media

- What is media convergence?

- Digital media as new media

- Key differences between traditional media and new media

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Explain a brief history of the media

- Describe how new technologies have led to the convergence of traditional and new media

- Describe the differences between traditional and new media and how the latter has enhanced participatory democracy

CHANGING MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

An important development with the growth of digital media has been the move from a traditional communication model of 'one to many', characteristic of print and broadcast media, to a 'peer to peer' model that facilitates collaborative creation and sharing of content. As content is digitized, it becomes accessible from a multitude of devices, including radio, television, personal computer and, perhaps most importantly, the mobile phone, which is emerging as the dominant platform for delivering content of all kinds. The digitalization of voice, image, sound and data – known as convergence – is creating new opportunities for interaction.

> **The digitalization of voice, image, sound and data – known as convergence – is creating new opportunities for interaction.**

ACTIVITIES

1. **In small groups, list the similarities and differences between traditional media and electronic or digital media.** Issues of editorial responsibilities, verification and other journalistic principles should be highlighted.

2. **One characteristic of traditional media is that media content goes through an organized editorial process designed to authenticate news stories and attribute them to a news media organization rather than to an individual.** The online citizen journalist does not work through this process. In this context, discuss the difference between the opinioned news item by an individual blogger and a news report appearing in the online version of a newspaper. How can you tell the difference?

3. **In small groups, discuss how the emergence of new media has impacted the way religious people and communities interact and how this benefits them.** Also ask how new media are impacting the lives of religious communities, and what challenges and opportunities arise access to digital media improves.

4. **Trainees research the extent to which new media are challenging traditional news media in their society, the different kinds of media that people in their society are using to express their own views on important news items, and the users of the different media platforms, along with issues/topics they are discussing.** The result of this research should be presented for group discussion and debate

UNIT 2
USES OF NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES IN SOCIETY – MASS AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

KEY TOPICS

- New media and social interactions – social networking, etc.

- Communication technology and development

- Interrelations between changes in mass communication as a result of new technologies and changes in institutions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Analyse the effects of digital communication on the social and political life of a society

- Describe the use of one or two forms of new media to share knowledge and information on a current issue in society

- Evaluate how new media are used in mass communication and the impact ofinstitutions and processes in society

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Class discussion: In groups, trainees discuss the role of mobile phones and social networking applications (e.g. Facebook and Twitter), as tools to spread information and mobilize groups. More generally, trainees could discuss: Who are the media owners? Who creates the messages, and what is the key message being conveyed? What audiences do they attempt to reach and why do they target them? Who are their sponsors/ investors, and what would they do differently? How do traditional and online media vary in this respect?

Class discussion: The trainer should lead a general class discussion on which of the new media are used predominantly in the trainees' environment: the Internet, mobile technologies (e.g. SMS and smart phones applications), digital TV, digital radio, computer games/ online games (e.g. virtual reality games, such as SIMS). The discussion should explore the advantages and disadvantages of these new media. They should present to the class what they see as the impact of mobile phones on users' social, economic and political lives.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Develop a strategy for using a social networking site to promote interaction on a particular topic in your community.** What are the risks and challenges religious leaders are likely to face in using social networking for educational purposes? Identify the risks and suggest ways of reducing their impact.

2. **Discuss how new media and new media technologies are changing the way in which people in your society communicate, and how this is changing the way people interact, exchange information and inform their decision-making.**

3. **Discuss how mass media and new technologies are used for mass communication, and how they are influencing the everyday lives, values and opinions of the public.** For example, how has mobile phone technology helped to bridge the communication gap between the rich and poor in society? Explore how digital communication is changing the way people in your society interact, share knowledge and exchange information.

MODULE 7

INTERNET OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES (CORE)

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Taking part in the information society is essential for citizens of all age groups. The Internet provides great opportunities to improve life for all users. It has positive effects on education, the working world and economic growth. With easy digitalization and storage of

Taking part in the information society is essential for citizens of all age groups.

information, and accessibility through a wide range of devices, the Internet has enormously increased the information resources available to people. Children and young people are often well acquainted with its applications and can benefit from its use tremendously, but they are also vulnerable. Risks and threats accompany this positive development, often in parallel to those that already exist in the offline world.

The explosion of hate websites and other websites that present opinion posing as objective fact represent a challenge for those seeking to identify reliable sources of information, and it is critical that religious leaders, like other teachers and citizens, have the tools to identify these websites. How can religious leaders recognize hate websites and separate commentary from fact? How can religious leaders help their followers to critically analyze information and opinion, especially when it comes to representations of other religious communities?

The best way to help young people and adults stay out of harm's way is to empower and educate them on how to avoid or manage risks related to Internet use.

The issue of radicalization among religious communities has emerged as a concern in many countries and among many religious groups around the world. Taking measures to protect minors may help address the problem. As helpful as these measures might be, however, total reliance on protection strategies has not been effective in enabling young people to use the

Internet responsibly.

The best way to help young people and adults stay out of harm's way is to empower and educate them on how to avoid or manage risks related to Internet use. As a critical starting point, it is therefore important to empower religious leaders to avoid or manage the risks and pitfalls inherent in using the Internet, and assist them in using the Internet as a platform to promote messages of peace and reconciliation. Technologies can play a useful and supportive role in this area.

UNIT 1
YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Web 2.0 and the virtual world

- Internet usage and online habits of children, young people, and religious leaders (?)

- International conventions and other instruments relating to children's rights

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Understand young people's Internet usage patterns and interests

- Have basic awareness of terms and conditions, codes of conduct and privacy regulations with respect to Internet use

- Develop their ability to use educational methods and basic tools to help young people, particularly in religious communities, use the Internet responsibly – and make them aware of the related opportunities, challenges and risks

ACTIVITIES

Web 2.0 is a shorthand term for aspects of the Internet that facilitate interaction and user-generated content (such as mobile phone applications).

This unit can be taught using resources you can find online, such as a rights-free videos about the Internet and its expanding features and impact society. Alternatively, you can prepare a short PowerPoint presentation on Web 2.0. It should include as many of the key elements of the virtual world as possible. Organize discussions in small groups about these key elements.

1. **Ask each group to prepare and deliver a short presentation on the benefits of Web 2.0.**

2. **Youth in religious communities, like other people, encounter images of the Other online**. What are the platforms on which youth learn about or engage with the Other? What are the risks and opportunities associated with web use? How are communities working to educate Youth to responsibly use the Internet?

3. **If time allows, and computers with Internet access are available:** Ask religious leaders if they belong to social networks and/or use the web, and if so, how frequently. Ask them to surf the web, set up a profile, look up profiles of others, upload and download content from Internet platforms (e.g. Wikipedia), and take part in chat rooms, online collaboration, blogging and twittering. A discussion with trainees after this activity should focus on the educational benefits and responsible use of the web, and its challenges and risks. Write down and discuss some of your personal concerns when using the web

4. **Ask religious leaders to organize themselves into small groups. Each group should discuss and list at least five main activities they think young people engage in on the Internet.** Ask them to rank the importance of these activities on a scale of 1 to 5. Each group should present the outputs of their discussions, explaining how they organized themselves and what influenced the decisions they took. The trainer should then present actual statistics (prepared prior to this session and based on existing resources) about children's use of the Internet if such figures are available. Compare the outputs of the group work with what actual statistics say. Discuss. Are there surprises? Are there statistics about Internet use specific to your region or country? If not, what are the implications? Discuss what can be done about the absence of such statistics

5. **Discuss with religious leaders the general terms and conditions, codes of conduct and privacy regulations of different Internet applications.** Then encourage them to develop a model code of conduct, focusing on the use of Internet by children and young people.

UNIT 2
CHALLENGES AND RISKS IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Understanding the challenges and risks of Internet use

- Empowerment and responsible use of the Internet

- Privacy and security

- Recognizing and responding to hate speech

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- List and describe the challenges/risks of Internet use and where they are most likely to occur, especially as they relate to religious communities.

- Develop knowledge about risks and threats that potentially accompany newly developed Internet applications

- Understand the interdependencies between users' behaviour and the likelihood of them being a victim or a perpetrator

- Identify hate websites or groups using social media to promote hate, and explain some options for responsibly and effectively responding to hate on the Internet

- Apply this knowledge to enable religious leaders to use the Internet more responsibly

CHALLENGES AND RISKS RELATED TO ONLINE CONTENT

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Age-inappropriate content: The Internet provides a wealth of content for all groups of users. Mainstream interests are served as well as special interest groups. Nevertheless, not all content should be accessible for children and young people. So it has to be carefully decided which content is appropriate to which age group. Special attention should be given

to content that is not illegal in general but might harm younger users. Age-inappropriate content like adult pornography might especially harm younger children when exposed to it unintentionally.The risk of facing age-inappropriate content can result from the user's own conduct when searching for it deliberately, as well as stumbling across it without intending to. Content that is not appropriate for all age groups might be provided for commercial reasons, but can also be generated by users themselves. Access to the former might be restricted to closed user-groups only, while user-generated content is mostly publicly available and therefore needs special attention. Since today many children and young people have a mobile phone with multimedia functionalities and access to the Internet at their fingertips, it must be considered that they might access age-inappropriate content when on their own and not having an adult for guidance at their side. Mobile devices also enable children to produce their own digital content in any life situation, thus contributing to the increasing volume of user-generated content.

Illegal content (i.e. racism and child pornography): The type of content classified as illegal depends foremost on national laws, although some type of content is outlawed in most countries. Nevertheless, illegal content is available and can be accessed unintentionally or deliberately by children and young people. Attention should also be paid to children and young people as potential victims of illegal content, e.g. by taking and publishing pictures or videos of child abuse.

Lack of verification of content: Given that content available through the Internet is often not verified by an independent source, it is important that young people learn to read content with a critical eye and not take everything that is said at face value. User-generated content, characteristic of the Web 2.0 environment, can often be partial, biased or inaccurate.Younger users need to be aware of the dangers of simply believing anything they read online.

Incitement of harm: There are many sites on the web inciting users to harm themselves (e.g. websites promoting suicide, anorexia or sectarianism). With Web 2.0 and the increasing possibilities to publish user's own content, the risk of being exposed to content inciting harm is growing. In particular children and young people are in many cases not able to make a realistic assessment of the risks arising from following the instructions given in such websites.

Infringement of human rights / defamation: In the anonymity of the web, propaganda against certain population groups or individuals can easily be widespread. In addition, one can presume that people act differently online when they do not have to face their counterparts or victims directly and therefore are not immediately confronted with the consequences of their conduct. Thus the risk of infringement of human rights and being a victim of defamation

is much more likely online than in reality. Also, defamatory content is harmful to children and young people whose opinion might be influenced by misleading information.

Inappropriate advertisement and marketing to children: Inappropriate advertisement means the risks of receiving or being exposed to advertising for products and/or services that are inappropriate to children like cosmetic surgery.The more users give away private information (i.e. name, age or gender), the more likely they are to receive advertisements or be asked to participate in lotteries. Since children are in many cases unaware of the consequences of typing their names into forms and boxes on the web, they are profoundly at risk. Considering the high penetration rate of mobile phones among children and young people, attention should also be paid to this additional channel for the dissemination of advertisement.

Privacy: Once published on the web, content can spread rapidly around the world and remain in existence indefinitely. Users, and in particular children and young people, are often unaware of the short-and long-term consequences of publishing texts and pictures they may not want to make available publicly later. Data stored on a server or a platform can be easily accessed by others and people may not be aware of how unprotected their personal data can be. It is important when using the Internet that people fully understand the environment they are working in.

Copyright infringement: Copyright infringement is a risk mostly related to the conduct of users themselves. Irrespective of whether a copyright has been infringed deliberately or accidentally, the infringement is seen as fraud by the holder and puts the violator at risk of penalty.

RISKS RELATED TO ONLINE CONTACT

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Harmful advice: Forums, blogs and other contact-related areas of the Internet provide a platform for the exchange of information and advice between users. This can be valuable assistance but can also facilitate contact with inappropriate or even more harmful advisors. The risk of receiving harmful advice, in particular for children and young people, is greater in social community platforms or other Web 2.0 applications than on regular websites.

Identity theft: Getting hold of, and making use of, other people's electronic identity (e.g. user name and password) with the intent to commit commercial or other fraud and to benefit from it is called identity theft. Identity theft is a growing risk as the number of virtual identities

is increasing with the number of people online and particularly those using personalized services.

Money theft/phishing: Phishing refers to the process of harvesting bank details, in particular personal identification numbers (PINs) and transaction authentication numbers (TANs), with the intent to ransack other people's bank accounts. Young people are more likely to not recognize a fake website and to give away their bank details.

Commercial fraud: Commercial fraud happens when sellers pretend to sell goods or services which, after payment, either do not show the promised attributes or are not delivered at all. It can also result from identity theft and phishing. Another source of commercial fraud can be the sale of digital services (e.g. a ring tone) at an unreasonable and unfair price, often bound to a permanent subscription to the service that was not intended by the buyer. In the majority of cases, users (and in particular young people and children) are unaware of the consequences of such contracts concluded online.

Grooming: Grooming refers to paedophiles using the Internet as a means to contact children and young people while concealing their adult identity. They often build their strategy on children's longing for friendship and familiarity. All areas of the Internet that provide platforms for personal contact and exchange are likely to provide a basis for grooming attacks. As mentioned before, the mobile phone (as an additional device to contact others and to access social networks) should be taken into strong consideration here, especially as children look at their mobile phone as a particular part of their private life and are mostly on their own when using it. Thus, with the increase of mobile communication technologies and social networks, the risk of falling prey to a grooming attack and then accepting a dangerous invitation has become much greater.

Bullying: Various types of bullying seem always to be part of people's lives. Bullying one another is certainly simplified by the Internet due to the anonymity provided by the medium. Children and young people in particular risk being both victims of bullying and offenders. Hence bullying is related to one's own conduct as well as to the conduct of others. Even though publishing content like defamatory pictures can be part of bullying, the phenomenon is chiefly related to online contact. As mentioned before, multifunctional mobile phones are often used for taking pictures with the intention of bullying and then uploading the pictures to the Internet or sending them via multimedia messaging (MMS) to others. Since many children and young people have a mobile phone equipped with a digital camera, bullying is becoming easier.

Disclosing private information: When setting up a profile on a social community platform, users are invited to disclose private information to present themselves to the community. Also in chat rooms and forums users may disclose private data to others, such as their address or telephone number. Young people in particular, are unable to foresee the consequences of

publishing their private data. They are often unaware that a chat room is not a private but a public area.

Profiling: With the increasing number of profiles a person can publish on different platforms, there is a greater risk that personal data published on one platform will be merged with data published on other platforms or given away elsewhere (e.g. in polling or raffles). Thus profiles are created that make it possible to directly address the person with potentially unwanted content, services and advertisements. Profiling can be carried out from the website when personal data are displayed publicly, but a more dangerous practice is when profiles of users (or their partial profiles) are harvested from the database behind the website and sold by the platform provider to third parties.

RISKS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

For many people, the Internet is a fact of life, so it's important for religious leaders and their communities to understand the tremendous opportunities this medium offers as well as the issues and challenges it presents.

The "echo chamber": Because all kinds of information and opinions can be found online, it is easy to find others who share the same opinions. This creates an "echo chamber" effect, in which peoples' viewpoints are confirmed instead of challenged— even when they are based on stereotypes, prejudices and inaccurate information.

Religious profiling: The depiction of particular religion or religious people in a certain way that gives a quick, convenient but often unhealthy view of the Other

Distorted images and misrepresentations: The deliberate or unintentional attempt to slant stories or distort images and ideas about religious groups and people, or distortions of their beliefs and what they hold sacred

Hacking: Illegal breaking into of individual computers, computer networks or websites of religious groups to distort messages and images

Cyberstalking or harassment: Delibrating targeting of religious people and groups repeatedly online by issuing threats or posting distorted information about them

Hate crimes: Promoting hatred online against certain religions or religious people because of their beliefs of ethinc background

Radicalization: The Internet provides multiple platforms and channels for radical and

violent political or sectarian groups to promote their messages and recruit new followers. Young people are susceptible to harmful advice, or to being lured in by the promises of community, friendship and belonging offered by radical groups.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Religious leaders and their communities need to understand cyber-environments:** Web sites, chat rooms, instant messaging, e-mail and file-sharing, and know the nuances of each technology.

   - Review a number of emails that may contain hate messages and watch several TV programmes with misrepresentations in a group.

   - Ask trainees to look closely at the images and information from the emails and programmes and see if they can identify any missing links and coded messages (like inciting words, hateful interpretations, stereotypes of the Other, etc.) that are not cleary visible or implied and discuss how such misreprestantions make them feel.

   - Ask them to think about where the emails originated and who created the shows and whether they think the writers and producers really understood the types of people they were portraying or whether they're basing characters on preconceived notions.

2. **A lot of the information we receive online comes in form of entertainment and advertisements (driven by commercial interests) that contain messages and misrepresentations that are bias laden.** Sometimes these biases are conveniently obscured or difficult for members of the public to easily comprehend.

   Here are some tips for religious leaders and their communities to identify issues that might "get lost" in the web of news, entertainment and advertisement fuelled by business interests.

   - Ask your group if they believe everything they see or read online

   - Explain how everything they see or read online (even news) is a reality that has been created by people that bring in their own points of view, biases and commercial interests

- Learn about various websites you visit or receive information from: who owns them and what interests do they represent? Do they focus a lot on conflicts? Do they focus enough on dialogue and opportunities for conflict resolution?

3. **Class discussion:**

Anybody can post on the Internet, making it difficult to identify quality information. Yet, some people believe that, "If it is on the Internet, it must be true." This has allowed hate speech, inappropriate, offensive and illegal content to flourish online.

It is important for religious leaders and their communities to understand how to respond to hate speech online.

Anyone and everyone can appear to be an "expert" online. Religious leaders should be able to evaluate the information they get online. That would help in shaping their responses to hate speech and other "unhealthy" information.

Because of its global nature, the Internet is difficult to regulate. However, some content is regulated under national laws or industry self-regulatory codes. **If any online content strikes you as inappropriate or offensive, you can take the following actions:**

- Share your disapproval of stereotyped characters and misrepresentations and explain why you disapprove.

- Counter the many stereotypical portrayals with more accurate images

- Consider contacting the website (or the media company that owns it, if it is news site) promoting misrepresentations, and explain why you believe they are inaccurate or misleading

- Consider contacting the organization that runs the website (or originated an email chain) and offer a different perspective. Keep your response simple. Include the following information: Title of the story or article, time and date of publication. A sentence or two about why you found the content inaccurate or offensive.

- If you do not receive a satisfactory reply, send a letter of complaint to a rights group or, in the case of a suspected legal violation, the appropriate government department

- If you come across information online by an organization not related to you that debunks hate speech, you can send the link via email or your website

- In many countries, incitement to violence is a criminal offence. If you see a website calling for violence against members of a specific group, you might consider reporting it to your local police department or reaching out to local government or lawmakers.

4. **It is important to understand what is meant by harmful online content. International human rights law specifies a number of acceptable restrictions upon freedom of expression – particularly when freedom of speech conflicts with other rights.** Examples of matters that might be restricted include incitement to violence or racial hatred, child sex images and defamation. In each case, international law stipulates that restrictions should be finely detailed and supervised by the courts

   - Ask religious leaders to share any experience that they or a friend have had with any one of the challenges outlined above. How did they deal with it? What was the final outcome? What lessons did they learn?

5 **Religious leaders should take an example of a news website and an example of a hate website and compare them.** What are the indicators of a news website, and what are some indicators that a website carries mostly opinion or hate speech? (For example, news websites will contain contact information, the full names of journalists (in most cases), will allow audiences to comment or reply to news articles, and will be transparent about most of their sources, unless their source would be compromised if they revealed it. Hate websites, for example, may refer to people of different nationalities by their religion or race, and may use inflammatory language.

MODULE 8

MODULE 8

AUDIENCE (OPTIONAL)

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

We all have experience as media audiences. Children and adults both spend a significant amount of their time each day engaged in media and communications activities. A common assumption has been that an audience is a homogeneous group of passive individuals who will interpret a text in the same way. More accurately, there are two main ways of studying media audiences. The first is as consumers of media products, or what the media and communications industry describes as 'target audiences'. The second is based on reception theory, where audiences are seen as active participants in reading and interpreting media and information texts.

Target audiences are groups of readers, viewers or listeners defined by specific characteristics such as age, income, gender or interests.

This is a specific group for whom media and other organizations develop content and shape messages. For example, advertisers are very concerned about buying time or space that will provide them with access to a specific demographic or target audience. In the television industry, for example, advertisers will buy commercial time slots from a network during a particular programme, if that programme is attracting the audience they want to reach. While we can be seen as a target audience for the media, every time we see or hear a media text our response is based on our individual social knowledge and the experiences we bring to a text. When we receive messages or information from the media, we interpret it through our personal ideology and values.

It is also very possible, however, that we actually negotiate the meaning we take from a text, accepting some elements and rejecting others. How meaning is constructed in footage or photographs (through camera angles, types of shots, editing, etc.) also affects audience interpretations in different ways

Researchers have discovered that magazine readers spend little more than 2 seconds glancing over a page. On television, a typical commercial 'spot' is only 15 or 30 seconds long, and many viewers 'flip' through commercial breaks, or 'surf' the Internet, staying in

one 'place' for only seconds at a time. In order to connect quickly with today's consumers, producers of media texts often create strong emotional appeal based on research into social demographics or 'psychographics', which is the analysis of people's attitudes, beliefs, desires and needs. Although a creative team cannot predict how each individual will react to the media, their research will give them a good idea of how large groups of the population will react.

Why do we study media audiences? Audience study helps to explain how important issues are seen by different people, according to their gender, age, or social group. It also helps us understand the relationship between the producer and audience of a text, and how producers attempt to influence audiences to read their material in a particular way. It helps us understand how young people make meaning of media texts in their lives outside the classroom. In this information age, audience study can also help us determine how to create our own media texts and communicate with our audiences more effectively.

This module will explore several key questions: How does a producer/author's background influence an individual's understanding of a media text? How does the construction of a text guide the interpretive process? How does an individual negotiate meaning in a media text? How do audiences use the media in their daily lives?

UNIT 1

KEY TOPICS

- Audience and market research

- Identifying target audiences

- How audiences negotiate meaning

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Explore the notion of audience – both target and active

- Identify reasons for interpretations of media texts

- Analyse how audiences are identified and targeted

- Explain how audiences choose which media they consume and interact with

- Analyse how audiences respond to media texts and explain the determining factors

- Examine the relationship between production, message and audience

ACTIVITIES

1. **Describe examples of how people use mass media in their daily lives. Consider the use of media for information, entertainment, monitoring, companionship, and identification.** What do these examples tell you about how audiences use and enjoy the media? How might these uses be different from what the producers intended?

MODULE 9

MEDIA, TECHNOLOGY AND THE GLOBAL VILLAGE (CORE)

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The question of the ownership and control of communication media is crucial as it defines media content and processes. Even as journalists promote democracy in the exercise of free speech and a free press, this freedom and journalists' independence may be impacted by the financial or political concerns of media owners or employers – subtle in some cases and more blatant in others. Such control, including its pattern and structure, is shaped mainly by pervasive political (and geopolitical) realities and the potential for ownership concentration.

Journalists' independence may be impacted by the financial or political concerns of media owners or employers

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This is why both the editorial independence and pluralism of media at local and global levels are important. Due to the increasing geographical complexity of the media, media flows are no longer just from North to South but also South to North and South to South. Some influential regional media are increasingly changing the configuration of the international media system.

In a majority of countries around the world, mass media organizations are private commercial companies. Others are privately owned but non-commercial, such as those operated by non-governmental organizations, while some are government-owned and controlled. In broadcasting, the public service broadcasting model provides an alternative to both commercial and government-owned media. A positive development is the growing popularity of community-owned media, which involve local residents in content development and give a voice to marginalized sectors of society.

Several news media outlets have also emerged that are mission-driven rather than profit-driven, and which rely on funding from foundations or public donations to operate, instead of or in addition to advertising and subscription revenues. There are also numerous newspapers and news websites, radio stations or television stations that have a faith-based mission, and which may or may not operate on a for-profit basis.

Technological advances in a worldwide market economy have encouraged the growth of global media companies, referred to as transnational media conglomerates. Their power and

influence extend over geographic, economic, and political barriers. Global media companies include those that operate at the regional level. Convergence, despite antitrust regulations, has also facilitated media mergers and acquisitions at the national and global level. Many mass media organizations are establishing alliances with companies doing business in telecommunications, web applications and entertainment (movies and video games), etc. The new companies created by these coalitions have become more powerful as their messages, images and voices can now be transmitted globally and reach even the remotest villages through diverse platforms–print, broadcast and digital.

The emergence of global media presents both challenges and opportunities. Some communication scholars have warned of threats of cultural homogeneity, but the same media tools offer opportunities for cultural diversity and pluralism (i.e. it is now easier to produce, share, and exchange local media content). The global media also have the capability and resources to set higher standards of professionalism.

Consequently many local media outlets are forced to become more competitive by improving the quality of their programming. Moreover, development issues that have a worldwide impact, such as climate change, pandemics or threats to biodiversity, can be effectively communicated by the global media. It is also acknowledged that many stories hidden from local and national audiences due to politico-economic constraints, are revealed to a worldwide audience by independent global media.

With new media technologies, there is now a greater two-way flow of information within and outside national boundaries.

The impact of media industries on the political setting is also changing. With new media technologies, there is now a greater two-way flow of information within and outside national boundaries, as well as broader platforms for public discourse. All these cultivate tolerance and understanding. The paramount issue is: How can the media help promote a wider range of options, choices and freedom?

The prevailing commercial media system deserves particular attention because advertising remains its main source of revenue. How can media organizations keep their independence and the public's trust, while remaining viable (profitable) and sustainable (in terms of operations)? The impact of overemphasizing either factor should be considered.

This module ends on an optimistic note, with a discussion on alternative media, especially those in small communities, operating in today's global media landscape. The increasing number of news media channels is also discussed, as these offer alternatives to the dominance of a few, including online news sites. Community media can be set up in schools, communities, workplaces, etc. and are alternative to larger media outlets. These 'small' media channels promote the right to information and offer local people a voice of their own.

UNIT 1
MEDIA OWNERSHIP IN TODAY'S GLOBAL VILLAGE (RECOMMENDED)

KEY TOPICS

- Media ownership, content development and programming

- Tensions between editorial independence and ownership interests

- The global economy, e-commerce and media ownership

- Patterns of communication, media ownership and control

- Private (commercial) media, government-owned or controlled media, and public media organizations, e.g., public broadcasting systems

- Community media

- Technology convergence (mass media, telecommunications and computers) and the emergence of media conglomerates

- Pluralism and concentration (e.g., media chains and cross ownership), acquisitions, mergers, joint ventures and consortiums, rransnationalization (global media corporations)

- Foreign content vs. local content

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Assess how media ownership and control affects media policies, processes, content, and transmission

- Describe the different patterns of media ownership and control

- Discuss the workings of the global economy, and the emergence of new technologies, and how these affect media ownership structures and patterns

- Demonstrate how media convergence facilitates new approaches to content (editorial) development (e.g., outsourcing, offshoring and home sourcing)

MONOPOLISTIC OWNERSHIP

Monopolistic ownership of the media, like state control, can pose a significant threat to media diversity and pluralism, and therefore to freedom of expression. Competition regulation is an important part of restricting monopolies as is the professionalism and independence of journalism. Diversity of viewpoints is also helped by a variety of forms of ownership (public, private and not-for-profit), as well as by the availability of different types of media (print, radio, television, Internet, etc.).

For discussion: The widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of people. While separately-owned newspapers and broadcasters generally criticize each other's content, the concentration of media under common ownership may prevent any kind of mutual criticism and result instead in self-promotion.

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Identify a national issue extensively covered by different major television stations (privately-owned, government-owned and publicly-owned) and compare and contrast the angles (i.e. particular points of view or perspectives) and treatment (i.e. reporting or manipulation) of news stories. (Refer to Module 2, Units 2 and 3, for background on news values and news development processes.)

Review the coverage of CNN and Al Jazeera on a particular topic and particular day and compare and contrast the angles and treatment of news stories.

UNIT 2:
SOCIO-CULTURAL AND POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF GLOBALIZED MEDIA (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Socio-cultural dimensions of global media
    - Media and popular culture
    - Cultural stereotyping, prejudices and biases
    - Perceived threat of cultural homogenization
    - Promise of cultural diversity and pluralism
    - Media and cultural tolerance, understanding and global citizenship

- Political impact of media
  - Providing mechanisms for the two-way flow of information (e.g. North-South, South- South)
  - Media as a platform for broadening the public sphere (democratic speech)
  - Media as a mechanism for political and social mobilization
  - The power of media in shaping public opinion and the public agenda
  - Promoting good governance through transparency and accountability

- Media and religious communities

- How global media and technological convergence address the needs of religious communities

- Case studies of media channels of religious communities

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Explain and illustrate how the media influence or define popular culture

- Explain the dynamics of what are seen as counter-processes of cultural homogeneity and localization

- Analyze how the media can broaden or narrow the public sphere, democratize access and promote political participation
- Discuss how global media (e.g. satellite and cable television, Internet) can address the information needs of religious communities

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF VARIOUS MEDIA TYPES

Discuss how the media influence or define popular culture. Examine whether the media are encouraging greater homogenization or diversity in the new entertainment culture.

Conduct a textual analysis of a popular song by popular western and local pop icons. Identify cultural values embedded in the lyrics of the songs and critique the appropriateness and desirability of those values for the local setting.

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Read several issues of a publication or view media programs intended for a specific religious community. Identify the common topics or themes discussed in the publication. Determine

whether issues related to the country where they are located and that affect the religious community are adequately represented.

Read examples and discuss religious issues in the coverage of mainstream, alternative and new media. How are different religious communities covered, including the Other? How are major political, environmental or social events covered? How much of the « full picture » can you get from any one of these sources?

UNIT 3
THE RISE OF ALTERNATIVE MEDIA, INCLUDING RELIGIOUS MEDIA (CORE)

KEY TOPICS

- Alternative media: why they have emerged
  - Public credibility of mainstream media
  - Advent of information and communication technology
  - Changing media habits and consumer preferences

- Defining alternative media (in contrast to mainstream media)

- Ownership and control of alternative media (i.e. democratizing ownership and control)

- Religious media as alternative media

- Audiences of alternative media: different sectors (women, young people, children, labourers/workers, etc.), marginalized groups (cultural communities, religious communities, etc.), etc.

- Content of alternative media (e.g. community or sector development issues and concerns)

- Journalistic processes in alternative media (e.g. community perspectives, participatory and interactive approaches)

- Planning, managing and sustaining an alternative medium in different settings
  - Alternative media in a school setting
  - Alternative media in a community
  - Revenue models of alternative media.

- The role of alternative media in society (e.g. transparency, diversity and freedom of expression)

- Community reporters and community broadcasting

- Conflict-sensitive reporting/peace journalism

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Define alternative media – their rationale, features and applications

- Analyze examples of alternative media using various formats – print, broadcast and electronic

- Describe the editorial processes (including planning, production and distribution) involved that distinguish alternative media from mainstream media

- Assess the impact of alternative media on specific communities (including virtual communities), particularly in covering issues and concerns of marginalized audiences and giving them a voice

- Plan the creation of alternative media for a community context

- Understand and describe religious media as a form of alternative media

RELIGIOUS MEDIA AS ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

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-Allan Thompson, *HüÉ%₊Éy ⱱⱮⱲₖy %ḟₐÉ%₣ˆ ₩₤yⱲₖ‰É≤ₐᴼᵧÉ*

While this is not always the case, the mainstream media often shows the "ugly" side of most religions–conflicts, fanaticism and extremism. In a world where corporate media is increasingly being challenged by independent and mission-driven journalism, new ways of reporting news and stories are emerging. Religious media can offer an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media that often leads to tension between religion and media.

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1   Thompson, A. (ed.) 2007. The Media and the Rwanda Genocide. London, Pluto Press, p. 349.

However, religious media may also face certain limitations and be prone to stereotyping. According to The Media Consortium, "Unlike the corporate media, independent (alternative) media is unafraid to tell the full story even when doing so threatens the market or those in power. Independent media are not responsible to the market. Whether organized as for-profits with diverse revenue streams or as nonprofits, independent media are mission-driven." Independent media serves its audiences. "By reflecting (its) audiences' concerns (which may be nonpartisan or partisan, left or right), independent media ensure that the public will have access to a diversity of views."[1]

Religious media can serve as independent media, providing different perspectives than the mainstream media. Religious media, other alternative media and mainstream media can all offer different perspectives that, when taken together, offer a more nuanced picture of events in our world.

Why religious groups may set up their own media:

- To give priority to issues of concern and interest to religion groups and religious people

- To give a different perspective to the stories about religion and religious people in the mainstream media

- To determine what stories get reported, and from what angle

- To provide an alternative to the limitations of main stream media

- The media encourages honest and factual reporting, because news consumers prefer accurate news. However, news consumers are also drawn to exciting news, which can mean that mainstream media produce sensational stories with shocking images of violence, conflict and disasters that give a skewed picture of reality.

- Because of the influence of technology, for many mainstream media outlets the line between news and entertainment is gradually blurring and critics say that sometimes serious information that affects the lives of a particular group is treated too "lightly."

- Mainstream media often face the challenge of deadlines. News outlets may not have time to present several sides of an issue, and simplified reports may contribute to stereotyping

- Religious media can rely on members of the group for its funding and sustenance; it can also get funding from foundations, government agencies (in some countries) and individuals

- Even where it is for-profit, religious media are driven by different principles and priorities than corporate media

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1   The Media Consortium, Mission-Driven Media: The New Landscape in Journalism. (Accessed 27 August, 2014) http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-power/the-new-landscape-in-journalism

The role of religious media

- Religious media can highlight the actual values that their religion promotes. These are issues that may not be found in the mainstream media because they don't necessarily resonate with broader audiences.

- Non-profit religious media are not beholden to profit and "market forces" and therefore ownership and control is diverse.

- Depending on their size and reach, religious media can fulfill the information needs (whether news, sports, entertainment, etc) of not only members of their own religious community, but other communities as well.

- Religious media can have a moderating influence and reflect a broad range of voices from within one religious community. (As opposed, for example, a breaking news story in a mainstream media outlet, which may not have the space or time available to quote more than one or two religious leaders, whose views may not be representative).

- Religious media, because they are specialized, provide more space for nuanced discussions and debates about issues that may not be given the same depth of coverage by mainstream media.

- Religious media can be used to promote dialogue and find a common ground during conflict.

Of course, religious media has its own limitations. Just as it can fill a need for specific types of information or opinion, it can also be used intentionally or unintentionally to create stereotypes and promote wrong information about other communities.:

- Often, there is only one perspective to news or information: that of the group behind the media outfit.

- Religious media tend to provide religious information and when they do cover general news, it is viewed through a specific religious prism, which may not allow room for alternative religious or secular interpretations

- Media published in the name of religion have been used to promote hate speech or create tension and conflict between different religions and communities

- Religious media can be a source of misinformation or misrepresentations of the Other, promoting stereotypes as realities.

- Various violent groups operating in the name of religion can fund media to promote their cause and their views and promote violence

CASE STUDIES

Teachers read case studies of leading religious media (some are available online) and list best practices in planning and managing alternative media, including religious media, particularly in the following areas:

- Issue planning (i.e. identifying story ideas)

- Generating or sourcing facts

- Processing/organizing data/information

- Involving stakeholders (audiences) in the editorial process

- Managing operations (editorial and business)

- Expanding and sustaining audiences

- Generating revenue

The trainees may use the following of characteristics as a checklist of indicators of best practices

- Innovative

- Creative

- Indigenous

- Effective

- Efficient

- Participatory

RESOURCES

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MODULE 10

MIL AS PREPARATION FOR EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE

INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

"Learning about the Other requires an understanding of the media, because the media plays an increasing role in shaping our meta-perceptions of the Other. Meta-perceptions are historical narratives received through our families, schools, and media, as well as other information providers. We must be aware of the way these meta-perceptions influence our immediate perceptions of each other, so as to strive towards less stereotypical views about the Other.

In addition to becoming more media and information literate, it is important to engage personally with a variety of people other than ourselves in one kind of identity or another. It is best to interact dialogically, that is, being respectful and open so as to seek better mutual understanding. Such dialogical encounters are the best way to transform our too often stereotypical meta-perceptions into nuanced and fairer ones. Dialogue is essential to improve our perceptions, our attitudes, and our thoughts about our complex contemporary reality."

Professor Patrice Brodeur, KAICIID

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

In a technologically driven and media saturated world, religious leaders need competencies to effectively engage with media and other information providers on different platforms. These competencies are covered under Media and Information Literacy (MIL).

Without MIL, disparities are likely to increase between those who have and those who do not have access to information and media. Additional disparities will emerge between those who are able and unable to find, analyse and critically evaluate and apply information and media content for decision-making.

New media and information technologies, while offering greater opportunities for new types of citizens' engagement, centered on freedoms and eradicating inequalities, also give rise to issues of safety, security, privacy, violence, hatred, stereotyping, etc. The use of these technologies can create tension between the need to empower or to protect citizens, and

MODULE 10

create tension between global and local religious and cultural interests that threaten to curtail the free expression and appreciation of interreligious and intercultural diversity.

Media and Information Literacy initiatives can help religious people acquire competencies to advocate and create their own counterbalance to dominant narratives by understanding the media and sharing their stories through creative engagement with the media, thus promoting interreligious dialogue and pluralism.

Recognition of religious diversity goes hand in hand with efforts to promote interreligious dialogue. In many instances, however, there is a narrowing of religious representations in the media and other information outlets, leading to a general feeling of invisibility among members of different religions and groups. Often religious people do not feel accurately represented in the media and this is a perception that cuts across a wide spectrum of religions.

In the case of the network of mainstream media, a limited range of representations tends to promote the creation of stereotypes through what is often called the process of 'othering', whereby the media fix, reduce or simplify according to the dictates of standardized program and formats.

Such media representations may serve to reinforce the power of vested interests and exacerbate social exclusion by excluding critical or marginalized voices, which usually belong to the category of 'Others'.[1]

Self-identity formation is critical to interreligious and intercultural dialogue, enabling people to understand their own religious and cultural points of departure, and thus engage in dialogue on the basis of an "authentic communication" in which they "have an awareness of the ways in which they might be manipulated or coerced and an awareness of the ways in which differential power is operative in the society".[2]

As Leonard Swidler said, "The primary purpose of dialogue is to learn, that is, to change and grow in the perception and understanding of reality."

1   Van den Bulck, H. and Van Poecke, L. (1996). National language, identity formation, and broadcasting: the Flemish and German-Swiss communities. In Braman, S. and & Sreberny-Mohammadi, A. (eds.), Globalization, communication and transnational civil society. Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, Inc.:, pp. 157-177. See also Branston, G and Stafford, R. (2003). The media student's book. Third edition. London and New York: Routledge.

2   Saffari, S. (2012). Limitations of dialogue: conflict resolution in the context of power asymmetries and neglected differences. In Mojtaba Mahdavi and W. Andy Knight (eds.), Towards the dignity of difference? Neither 'end of history' nor 'clash of cilivizations'. Ashgate: Surrey & Burlington, pp.245-259.

Media and information literacy helps religious leaders to critically reflect on the ways that their existing perceptions of the Other have been formed by the media and other information providers. This ability to use media and information to create a more accurate and nuanced understanding of the Other is a critical first step in preparing to engage in interreligious dialogue.

> **"The primary purpose of dialogue is to learn, that is, to change and grow in the perception and understanding of reality."**

Media and information literacy empowers religious leaders to navigate a complex and changing media and information environment. It allows them to identify and meet their information needs. It gives them the tools necessary to responsibly seek out, understand and transmit information and ideas to their followers, colleagues and peers.

Unit 1
Understanding MIL for Religious Leaders

KEY TOPICS

- Understanding MIL

- MIL in the digital age

- Enhancing critical thinking skills — comprehension, analysis, evaluation

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Media and information literacy builds upon a concept that harmonises and encapsulates the large number of related existing literacies that can be identified in the digital age, such as news literacy, television literacy, film literacy, computer literacy, Internet literacy and digital literacy, as well as other emerging concepts like social media literacy.

After completing this unit, religious leaders should be able to:

- Appreciate the power of information

- Understand that all information is subject to interpretation.

- Understand the role and functions of media and other information providers in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue

- Locate and access relevant information

- Critically evaluate information and the content of media and other information providers, including those on the Internet in terms of authority, credibility and current purpose

- Ethically and responsibly communicate one's understanding of created knowledge to religious people in an appropriate form and medium

- Apply ICT skills in order to process information and create media messages to enhance interreligious dialogue

- Engage with media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, to promote self-expression, freedom of expression and interreligious dialogue

BACKGROUND

Media and Information Literacy has the citizen as its starting point. However, people are not regarded as inactive from an MIL perspective. Rather, they are actively involved in constructing their own realities.

This view of active, self-determining citizens is critical to interreligious and intercultural dialogue in which communication is a given. MIL can enhance interreligious understanding and make people more critical of how they form perceptions of the Other.

MIL can enhance interreligious understanding and make people more critical of how they form perceptions of the Other.

Media and information literacy equips citizens to be more discerning and probing of the world around them, thereby becoming more self-aware and better able to appropriate the offerings of media and information for exchange of ideas, protection of self-identity and promotion of dialogue.

ACTIVITIES

1. In groups, discuss why information matters and analyze the information needs of religious people

2. Analyze how religious people identify the news that "matters" to them

3. Ask the group to review a newspaper story about religion and conflict. Identify how

different members of the group interpret the same story

4. Discuss with the group how to monitor media coverage of religion the media's role in shaping religious and cultural issues

5. Ask the group to respond to media texts about religion and religious people and highlight the determining factors

6. Ask the group to present materials that they view as hate speech to determine if there is consensus around such materials

7. Ask them to develop an ethical and responsible response and determine the mode and medium of response that will be most effective

Unit 2
MIL and Interreligious Dialogue: A synthesis

Dialogue requires not only mutual sharing and exchange, but also mutual listening and consideration of the other's view[…]Dialogue is not preaching or explaining, or debate; it maps the transformation of people from postures of intolerance or passive tolerance to attitudes of deep understanding and respect of the other."

Unity in Diversity: Interfaith Dialogue in the Middle East

KEY TOPICS

- What is interreligious dialogue

- Enlisting MIL in support of interreligious dialogue

- News Media, MIL and interreligious dialogue

1   Abu-Nimer, M., Khoury, A., Welty, E., 2007. Unity in Diversity: Interfaith Dialogue in the Middle East. Washington, DC., United States Institute of Peace Press, pp. 8.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders will be able to:

- Appreciate the role of MIL in promoting understanding and enhancing interreligious dialogue

- Critically reflect on how the media and other information providers shape their perceptions of the Other, and appreciate how others' views of their own traditions are shaped by the media and other information providers

- Appreciate the importance of interreligious dialogue as a necessary tool for understanding the Other

BACKGROUND

While religion can provide deep meaning and richness for people around the world, historically it has also been viewed as a flashpoint for conflict and misunderstanding. "Unless ignorance and hatred can be overcome by tolerance and understanding, religious and cultural conflicts are likely to continue—and intensify."[1]

Tolerance and understanding can be achieved if religious leaders acquire MIL skills to enable them distill information and apply it in their relationship with the Other.

What is interreligious dialogue?

Interreligious dialogue provides the opportunity for authentic encounter among followers of different religions to share perspectives, so they can better understand their commonalities as well as their differences.

Interreligious dialogue has been described as, "All positive and constructive interreligious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths and non-faith which are directed at mutual understanding and enrichment.'[2]

Interreligious dialogue revolves around communication and capacity-building. Put differently: in order to promote interreligious dialogue and thus reduce religious dissonance, there is a need to build the communicative capacity of religious leaders and their followers.

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1 Hoerger, E (ed.) 2010. Bridging Babel: New Social Media and Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding. Washington, D.C,: The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, p. 3.

2 Pontifacl Council for Inter.Religioous Dialogue, Dialogue and Proclamation, 1991.

There is a need to build the communicative capacity of religious leaders and their followers.

The emergence of new technologies makes the tasks for religious leaders even more daunting. They are confronted with different ways and platforms to connect with their followers and the Other and they have to understand the peculiarities and challenges of these platforms in order to use them to halt bigotry and prejudice and foster interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

ACTIVITIES

1. Ask the group to give their definition of interreligious dialogue

2. Discuss how MIL can promote interreligious dialogue.

3. Ask the group (using their understanding of MIL) to highlight ways that the media can be enlisted in support of intercultural dialogue

4. Discuss what their communities need or want to know? How does the Other view their community and how does their community view the Other?

5. Ask trainees to make a list of things they can do to reach out to members of their communities and other communities to promote dialogue

6. In what way does promoting Media and Information Literacy among religious leaders provide a basis for constructive interreligious dialogue?

7. Do a review of the group's grasp of the role of MIL and the role of dialogue in creating understanding between religious communities

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MODULE 11

COMMUNICATION, MIL AND LEARNING –
A MODULE FOR LEADERSHIP (OPTIONAL)

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Anonymous

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This curriculum document on media and information literacy (MIL) should be viewed within the broader field of communication, as informed by modern learning theories. Teaching and learning are closely related and are integral parts of the communication process. In fact, neither can be effective without the other (Ndongko, 1985). Teachers and students consciously or unconsciously apply elements of a basic and sometimes complex communication process in the classroom.

This section was originally developed for teachers in classroom setting. However, youth and other community leaders in a teaching position can also apply it.

Teaching and learning are made more challenging when new technologies, such as mass media (radio, television and newspaper libraries), are integrated into the classroom or other learning environment. The acquisition of MIL skills by teachers and students opens up opportunities to enrich the educational environment and promote a more dynamic teaching – learning process.

The interaction of teachers, professors or other youth leaders and students with the media and other information providers can help to create learning environments that are democratic and pluralistic, and that also foster knowledge creation. Awareness of these dynamic forces as acted out in the classroom brings into focus the cognitive and metacognitive processes identified in learning theories.

This module explores links between communication and learning (including learning theories), and suggests how MIL can enhance this relationship. It ends with a discussion on managing change in order to foster an enabling environment for MIL.

UNIT 1
COMMUNICATION, TEACHING AND LEARNING (OPTIONAL)

KEY TOPICS

- Defining communication

- Basic theories of communication

- Exploring teaching and learning as communication processes and how knowledge of MIL can enhance this process

- Strategies for teaching through and about MIL

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders should be able to:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of communication

- Identify and analyze basic theories of communication and their relation to the teaching – learning process with consideration to the application of MIL skills

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES AND ACTIVITIES

If we are using the media other information providers (including the Internet or new technologies) in the classroom or learning environment, we need to consider our ways of teaching: how are we using media and other information providers? How do they impact the ways in which information is communicated to students?

Communication models can provide a framework for conceptualizing the place of MIL within the teaching and learning experience. These models provide the opportunity to closely examine the roles of leaders, communities, including youth and the media, libraries, archives and other information providers in the classroom. Many of these models share the components listed below (Shannon and Weaver, 1948; Schramm, 1954; Berlo, 1960):

- Sender (originator/source)

- Message (content)

- Channel (medium)

- Receiver (responder/decoder)

- Feedback (receiver to sender and vice versa as the loop continues)

Identify the ways in which this model could be applied to the learning experience in your classroom, youth group or learning environment. What roles do you assume as leader? What roles are available to your community, including youth? How is the learning experience shaped by these roles? How is the feedback process managed in the teaching-learning process? How can your knowledge of MIL help to improve this process?

Consider the opportunities communities, including youth have to critically examine the platforms through which they receive information in your classroom, youth group or learning environment. Related to this are notions of teaching about and through the media, libraries, archives and other information providers. Through which media are communities, including youth receiving information in your classroom, youth group or learning environment? What is the impact of these media on the teaching and learning experience? Identify the media and sources of information that communities, including youth have access to in your classroom, youth group or learning environment. Explain the rationale and selection process for including these in the curriculum.

Teaching about MIL requires awareness and analysis of the media and other information providers and the role they play in lifelong learning and the conveying and shaping of information and messages (i.e. the media and technology themselves become the subject of study in the classroom). Teaching through the media and other information providers requires an awareness and analysis on the part of leaders of their own role and the role of the media and technology in the teaching and learning process. Phrased differently, what is being taught through media and/or technology in the classroom, youth group or learning environment ? Is there a particular topic or subject that is being taught through the use of technology or the media? How can leaders apply MIL skills to what they are teaching?

Identify general examples of teaching about MIL and through the media, libraries, archives and other information providers. Describe specific activities/examples in your classroom, youth group or learning environment where both of these approaches are used. What do these approaches offer to communities, including youth" in terms of their learning experience?

UNIT 2
LEARNING THEORIES AND MIL (OPTIONAL)

KEY TOPICS

- Pedagogy and MIL

- What is metacognition?

- Metacognition and MIL: making the link

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, leaders will be able to:

- Develop pedagogical strategies appropriate for students of MIL

- Identify and develop metacognitive strategies for communities, including youth

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES

Consider the following MIL skills that are essential to media and information literacy:

- Task definition
- Information search
- Location and access
- Analysis of messages and information
- Assessment of context for messages and information
- Use of information
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

Identify the ways in which communities, including youth, can develop and demonstrate these skills in your classroom, youth group or learning environment.

- Describe specific pedagogical strategies or activities that make this possible.

- Develop a lesson plan or outline for a curriculum unit that incorporates these strategies and activities. Consider developing a stand-alone lesson/outline in MIL, or a lesson/ outline that integrates MIL into an existing course. Identify the key considerations/ accommodations that leaders need to make in order for students to successfully demonstrate these skills.

- Considering the communication model outlined in the previous unit, explain and

justify the roles that the media and other information providers will play in your lesson/unit outline. What role(s) will you assume as leader? What role(s) will be available to your communities, including youth ? How will these roles enhance the learning process?

- Examine the list of skills for MIL that appears above. For each MIL skill, list and describe a metacognitive strategy communities, including youth could use to support their learning experience. For example, task definition could be supported by the use of a concept map, while analysis of messages and information could be supported by a diagram that labels various parts of an information text, accompanied by critical questions

- Select several activities from a module of your choice. Identify the skills that communities, including youth require to complete each activity. What role can metacognition play in the transfer of learning from this activity to students' involvement with the media and other information providers outside of the classroom, youth group or learning environment?

- Consider the role of libraries and museums in developing MIL skills. Design an activity that illustrates how a specific pedagogical strategy could be used in one of these environments. Consider the unique features that are part of these environments and that can influence the teaching and learning experience in a positive way

- Based on activities from one of the modules in this curriculum, or from your own work, explain the ways in which an MIL curriculum provides opportunities for differentiated instruction and learning (i.e. kinesthetic learning, visual learning, auditory learning, etc.)

UNIT 3
MANAGING CHANGE TO FOSTER AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR MIL IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

KEY TOPICS

- The global media and information literacy drive: an overview of actions around the world, policy development, etc.

- The enabling environment required for take-up of MIL in learning environments

- Challenges to be faced in integrating MIL into learning environments and devising strategies to overcome these challenges

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, religious leaders should be able to:

- Identify and describe MIL initiatives being implemented locally and globally

- Promote media and information literacy to different stakeholder groups

- Describe key issues to be considered when planning the integration of MIL into learning environments

ACTIVITIES

1. **Conduct a search of associations and organizations that support the goals of MIL**. What information and resources (human and material) do these programmes offer teachers?

2. **To ensure the success of MIL courses and programmes, many experts have developed a set of recommendations.** Several of these recommendations are listed below. Explain the ways in which this list could be applied to your particular situation. Identify any additional recommendations you would make to ensure the success of MIL in your department or institution

   Suggested recommendations:
   - Identify content
   - Identify key participants and supporters at programme and policy levels
   - Develop a strategic plan for implementation/integration, etc.
   - Develop a plan for promoting MIL
   - Identify supporting agencies/associations
   - Identify available and required resources
   - Develop evaluation tools for MIL courses and programmes

   Does this list change when one considers the criteria of a successful programme for students? Identify any additional considerations here.

3. **Considering the needs of your own educational community, what are the ways in which MIL could be integrated into existing programmes for teachers, or developed as a stand-alone programme?** What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Cite specific modules as examples

4. **Develop a plan for promoting MIL to policy-makers, programme directors, and teachers in your institution.** What are the key priorities or needs for each group? Explain how this MIL curriculum can help address those needs. Identify other stakeholder groups that could be included here. What role could each play in the promotion of MIL?
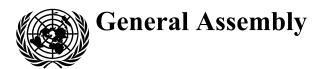
RESOURCES

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United Nations

General Assembly

A/HRC/RES/16/18

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Human Rights Council
Sixteenth session
Agenda item 9
Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related
form of intolerance, follow-up and implementation
of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council*

16/18
Combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief

The Human Rights Council,

Reaffirming the commitment made by all States under the Charter of the United Nations to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to, inter alia, religion or belief,

Reaffirming also the obligation of States to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion or belief and to implement measures to guarantee the equal and effective protection of the law,

Reaffirming further that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides, inter alia, that everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief, which shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching,

Reaffirming the positive role that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the full respect for the freedom to seek, receive and impart information can play in strengthening democracy and combating religious intolerance,

Deeply concerned about incidents of intolerance, discrimination and violence against persons based on their religion or belief in all regions of the world,

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* The resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council will be contained in the report of the Council on its sixteenth session (A/HRC/16/2), chap. I.

Please recycle

Deploring any advocacy of discrimination or violence on the basis of religion or belief,

Strongly deploring all acts of violence against persons on the basis of their religion or belief, as well as any such acts directed against their homes, businesses, properties, schools, cultural centres or places of worship,

Concerned about actions that wilfully exploit tensions or target individuals on the basis of their religion or belief,

Noting with deep concern the instances of intolerance, discrimination and acts of violence in many parts of the world, including cases motivated by discrimination against persons belonging to religious minorities, in addition to the negative projection of the followers of religions and the enforcement of measures that specifically discriminate against persons on the basis of religion or belief,

Recognizing the valuable contribution of people of all religions or beliefs to humanity and the contribution that dialogue among religious groups can make towards an improved awareness and understanding of the common values shared by all humankind,

Recognizing also that working together to enhance implementation of existing legal regimes that protect individuals against discrimination and hate crimes, increase interfaith and intercultural efforts, and to expand human rights education are important first steps in combating incidents of intolerance, discrimination and violence against individuals on the basis of religion or belief,

1.   *Expresses deep concern* at the continued serious instances of derogatory stereotyping, negative profiling and stigmatization of persons based on their religion or belief, as well as programmes and agendas pursued by extremist organizations and groups aimed at creating and perpetuating negative stereotypes about religious groups, in particular when condoned by Governments;

2.   *Expresses its concern* that incidents of religious intolerance, discrimination and related violence, as well as of negative stereotyping of individuals on the basis of religion or belief, continue to rise around the world, and condemns, in this context, any advocacy of religious hatred against individuals that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, and urges States to take effective measures, as set forth in the present resolution, consistent with their obligations under international human rights law, to address and combat such incidents;

3.   *Condemns* any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, whether it involves the use of print, audio-visual or electronic media or any other means;

4.   *Recognizes* that the open public debate of ideas, as well as interfaith and intercultural dialogue, at the local, national and international levels can be among the best protections against religious intolerance and can play a positive role in strengthening democracy and combating religious hatred, and convinced that a continuing dialogue on these issues can help overcome existing misperceptions;

5.   *Notes* the speech given by Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference at the fifteenth session of the Human Rights Council, and draws on his call on States to take the following actions to foster a domestic environment of religious tolerance, peace and respect, by:

(*a*)   Encouraging the creation of collaborative networks to build mutual understanding, promoting dialogue and inspiring constructive action towards shared policy goals and the pursuit of tangible outcomes, such as servicing projects in the fields of education, health, conflict prevention, employment, integration and media education;

(*b*)   Creating an appropriate mechanism within Governments to, inter alia, identify and address potential areas of tension between members of different religious communities, and assisting with conflict prevention and mediation;

(*c*)   Encouraging training of Government officials in effective outreach strategies;

(*d*)   Encouraging the efforts of leaders to discuss within their communities the causes of discrimination, and evolving strategies to counter these causes;

(*e*)   Speaking out against intolerance, including advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence;

(*f*)   Adopting measures to criminalize incitement to imminent violence based on religion or belief**;**

(*g*)   Understanding the need to combat denigration and negative religious stereotyping of persons, as well as incitement to religious hatred, by strategizing and harmonizing actions at the local, national, regional and international levels through, inter alia, education and awareness-building;

(*h*)   Recognizing that the open, constructive and respectful debate of ideas, as well as interfaith and intercultural dialogue at the local, national and international levels, can play a positive role in combating religious hatred, incitement and violence;

6.   *Calls upon* all States:

(*a*)   To take effective measures to ensure that public functionaries in the conduct of their public duties do not discriminate against an individual on the basis of religion or belief;

(*b*)   To foster religious freedom and pluralism by promoting the ability of members of all religious communities to manifest their religion, and to contribute openly and on an equal footing to society;

(*c*)   To encourage the representation and meaningful participation of individuals, irrespective of their religion, in all sectors of society;

(*d*)   To make a strong effort to counter religious profiling, which is understood to be the invidious use of religion as a criterion in conducting questionings, searches and other law enforcement investigative procedures;

7.   *Encourages* States to consider providing updates on efforts made in this regard as part of ongoing reporting to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

8.   *Calls upon* States to adopt measures and policies to promote the full respect for and protection of places of worship and religious sites, cemeteries and shrines, and to take measures in cases where they are vulnerable to vandalism or destruction;

9.   *Calls for* strengthened international efforts to foster a global dialogue for the promotion of a culture of tolerance and peace at all levels, based on respect for human rights and diversity of religions and beliefs, and decides to convene a panel discussion on this issue at its seventeenth session, within existing resources.

46th meeting
24 March 2011
[Adopted without a vote.]