

Title: Digital and Social Media in Nonviolent Resistance

Type: Workshop

Goal: Greater awareness of the uses and limitations of social media and digital tech in nonviolent struggle.

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- Explore approaches to how nonviolent movements are using digital and social media
- Analyze contemporary case examples of digital activism
- Compare and contrast how movements and their adversaries are using digital tech for their own purposes
- Gain access to a list of useful tools for digital activism
- Debate and discuss various claims about the uses and limitations of digital and social media
- Develop a list of best practices when utilizing digital and social media in activism

Materials: Prezi or PPT, articles, flip chart, statements, list of tools

Time: 2.5 hours

Process:

1. **Introductions:** Facilitators introduce themselves. Participants are asked to introduce themselves and share a little bit about their interest in the subject matter. Participants are asked to share one thing about digital activism or social media that has inspired or surprised you? Optional: As participants share a story about digital activism, the facilitator places that story along a timeline to map out the evolution of different digital tools and their uses in movements and activism. (10 minutes)
2. **Short Presentation.** Facilitators present definition of key terms [See Appendix A] to make sure everyone is on the same page for discussion. Terms to be defined include: social media, digital media, new media, mainstream/commercial media, internet, intranet, digital activism. They also present some emerging trends and statistics about internet and mobile phone usage, and social media penetration. Questions should include: globally, how many people are connected to the Internet? How many people are using mobile phones? Smart phones? What is the forecast what the digital landscape will look in 20 years? How many people use social networking sites and how much content is being shared. How has social media, digital tech, and the internet shaped what is referred to as “new media” and why new dynamics are at play? (20 minutes)

3. **Agree/Disagree & Fishbowl Debate.** Facilitators display a series of statements one at time. Participants are asked to move to either side of the learning space depending on whether they agree or disagree with the statement [See Appendix B]. Two participants, one from each side, are invited to sit in the middle of the room and argue their point of view in 30 seconds or less. After each person has had a chance to argue their side, other people from their side can tap in and replace the person. Facilitators write up key points from both sides on flip chart. This process continues for each statement. (45 minutes)
4. **De-Brief & Group Work Set Up.** After each statements has been discussed the facilitators review some of the key points from each argument and add any other perspectives that may have been left out. #Amina/Syria Case, Colombia/FARC, Egypt, Tunisia, Wikileaks, India, Nigeria, (15 minutes)
5. **Paired Group Work (Think-Pair-Share).** Each participant is paired up with another. Each person is given an article or video that explores some of the issues raised in the statements and the debates. Each person is asked to read their article or view their video and then discuss with their partner any lessons these stories, perspectives or cases reveal about the use of digital tech and social media in waging nonviolent struggle. Each pair is then asked to generate at least five “tips, tricks, or strategies for digital activism” [created by and for nonviolent activists]. (30 minutes)
6. **Group List Making>Selecting.** Each group is asked to briefly present their list to the rest of the group, citing examples from their articles and videos. After each group has shared their list, the entire group is tasked with generating one communal list that they will present the next day. (30 minutes)

APPENDIX A

Definition of terms

Social media

Mainstream media

New media

Internet

Intranet

Splinternet

Digital

Digital activism

Firewall

Proxy

Circumvention tools

Anonymity software

Server

APPENDIX B

Statements about digital and social media

The rise of social media marks the decline of the mainstream/commercial media (Daryn)

The best way for a movement to broadcast its message is through mainstream media outlets (Nicola)

The internet and digital technologies are more effectively used by movements that are by autocratic regimes (Nicola)

Activists are increasingly using tools that are NOT designed for activists (Daryn)

Digital activism is more effectively utilized in developed countries than in developing countries (Daryn)

Social media platforms do not foster real political debate (Nicola)

Online organizing does not foster strong ties that are required for a an on-the-ground movement (Daryn)