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SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY  
ECONOMY CONSORTIUM

# Enhancing studies and practice of the social and solidarity economy

A reference handbook

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## Chapter 5: ICT - Effective practices



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will consider two aspects of information and communication technology (ICT): social media and community radio.

Social media is understood within this chapter as a group of internet-based applications which allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Social media enable organisations “not only to send and receive information but also connect with and mobilize the public ... All are distinguishable from prior forms of new media by their greater degree of user involvement and interactivity” (Saxton and Wang 2014, p. 851-851 (see also Jenkins (2006); Kanter and Fine (2010); Miller (2011)). This could be understood as a move from broadcasting to participatory and dialogic models of internet use.

The following forms of social media and their use by organisations within the social economy system will be considered (with the specific application referred to in the chapter in brackets):

- Online social networking (Facebook, Twitter, Ning)
- Video sharing websites (YouTube)
- Survey software (Survey Monkey)
- Decision-making software (Loomio)
- Blogs

Social media has been chosen to exemplify ICT use because of its ubiquity in many parts of the world, including Europe and parts of Latin America and its

potential alignment with the values of the social and solidarity economy.

Community radio has been chosen as a principal form of communication in parts of Africa and Latin America, particularly where internet access is limited. Community radio organisations are themselves entities in the social and solidarity economy, normally with the legal form of a trust of association. In their ideal form they are owned and operated by and for the community.

The chapter starts with a theoretical understanding of social media in relation to communication theory from a Latin American perspective. A literature review focusing on the UK, Canada and the USA follows in the second section. The third section considers ways in which community radio can be an instrument of democracy and development and draws mainly upon African authors.

### CHAPTER QUESTIONS

- How can effective practice be understood in relation to the use of social media and of community radio in the social and solidarity economy?
- How can organisations in the social and solidarity economy make effective use of social media and community radio to develop the scope and effectiveness of their activities?

## Glossary

**Web 1.0** – the first stage of development of the internet, in which users were consumers of content from static web pages.

**Web 2.0** – the second stage of development of the internet, characterized by the change from static web pages to dynamic or user-generated content and the growth of social media.

**Web 3.0** – the third stage of development of the internet, sometimes called the personalised or semantic web.

**Asynchronous communication** – communication which is not live and in which participants do not need to be present at the same time (e.g. discussion forums; email communication)

**Synchronous communication** – communication which is live and in which participants do need to be present at the same time (e.g. live internet chat).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES

This section will introduce the major critical thinkers on the nature, function and role of communication in Latin America since the 1960s.

#### Theoretical and critical approaches to communication

The 1960s saw for the first time a critical consideration of the technological perspective of communication methods. The predictions of the Canadian Marshall McLuhan, providing a specific analysis of the evolution of electronic means of communication, especially television, were key to understanding the social, psychological and cultural changes that brought about these technological developments.

For McLuhan (1964) it was no longer the content that was the centre of attention, rather it was the medium itself that conveyed the message. In the 60s and 70s, an alternative thinking around communication, based on Critical Theory,<sup>1</sup> emerged out of Latin America, adding to the complex social situations in

the south of the continent during those decades. New conceptualisations of communication emerged based on the communicative practices used by the social movements of the time. The influence of Critical Theory was clear among them as a decisive part of the make-up of this alternative thinking.

Latin America inherited the argumentative strength of the Italian-Venezuelan Antonio Pasquali, who distinguished between the processes of communication and information within what is known as General Communication Theory. With this theory the author declared forcefully that true communication was that founded on dialogue and which therefore “produces (and at the same time supposes) a biunique relationship, only possible when the two poles of the relational structure (transmitter-receptor) follow a bivalent rule: every transmitter may be a receptor, every receptor may be a transmitter” (Pasquali, 2008, p.61, translated from the Spanish).

After Pasquali, many others came to strengthen the study and research into communication, quickly becoming major figures in the shaping of this new critical thinking essential to the Latin American context. Table 5.1 highlights some examples:

It is important to remember that the processes of communication and of information each comply with different political and socio-cultural agenda.

<sup>1</sup> A great exponent of this theory is the Frankfurt School in Germany and its first generation of thinkers: Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and Walter Benjamin. The legacy of this first generation's critical proposals on one-dimensional society and the cultural industry. Communication continues to play a part in the study of mass media but based on the cultural criticism that supported this theory. It was proposed, as an object of study, to respond to “those progressive social forces which, in its utopic aspect, wanted to know who controls mass communication, how and why, in advanced capitalist society” (Saperas, 1993, p.169).

**TABLE 5.1 LATIN AMERICAN THEORIES OF COMMUNICATION**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Theoretical perspective</b>
<b>Paraguay,</b> <b>Juan Díaz Bordenave</b>	It is important to reflect on one's situation; one's relationship with oneself, with other humans and with nature. This implies establishing a dialogue capable of building communication as a product of one's praxis, thoughts and actions on and with the world (1978, p.277).
<b>Spain/Colombia,</b> <b>Jesús Martín-Barbero</b>	Thinking about communication processes from a cultural point of view means no longer thinking about them through disciplines or methods. It means breaking the safety net provided by reducing the problem of communication to one of technology (2003, p.289).
<b>Brazil,</b> <b>Paulo Freire</b>	Humans are not made in silence but in words, actions and thought (1966).
<b>Bolivia,</b> <b>Luis Ramiro Beltrán</b>	Alternative communication for democratic development is the expansion and equity of people's access to and participation in the communication process through mass media, interpersonal and mixed methods. It ensures, as well as technological progress and material well-being, social justice, freedom for all and a government of the majority (2005, p.21).
<b>Peru</b> <b>Rosa María Alfaro</b>	If communication is linked to development, it is not only as a helpful methodological contribution but also as the very object of societal transformation, constituting both a means and an end (1993 p.131).
<b>Colombia,</b> <b>Clemencia Rodríguez</b>	Communication allows the average citizen to be a catalyst for processes of symbolic appropriation, recodification of the environment, of the self. In other words, processes for creating firmly rooted local identities, from where visions for the future can be proposed (2008, p.12).
<b>Bolivia,</b> <b>Alfonso Gumucio Dagron</b>	Communication for social change (CSC) is a process of dialogue and debate, based on tolerance, respect, equity, social justice and the active participation of all. There are five conditions or characteristics present in CSC processes: community participation and appropriation; language and cultural belonging; creation of local matters; use of appropriate technology; associations and networks (2011, p.33).

It should also be noted that in information processes what dominates is the knowledge required for action; with communication processes, on the other hand, the extent and depth of participation and collective action are greater, and this becomes a central axis in effective and sustainable decision-making processes within social and solidarity movements and organisations.

The day-to-day implications of electronic means of communication are evidenced by McLuhan, who recognises their impact in our social, psychological and sensory environments. His work led to technological determinism<sup>2</sup> being considered relevant to the study of technological evolution, in relation to its impacts in society.

The contribution of Manuel Castells is equally useful, establishing the concept of network society, maintained by integrating all modes of human

communication. It is a question of “forming a supertext and a metalanguage which, for the first time in history, integrates the modalities of written, oral and audiovisual human communication in the same system” (Castells, 2003). Regarding the new conditions that determine life in a network society, Castells states that:

As a historic tendency, the key functions and processes of the Information Age are increasingly organised around networks. They constitute the new social morphology of our societies, and the diffusion of network logic substantially modifies the operation and outcomes in the processes of production, experience, power and culture.

While the networking form of social organisation has existed in other times and spaces the new information technology paradigm provides the material basis for its pervasive expansion throughout the entire social structure. (2005, p.549)

<sup>2</sup> Technological determinism is a reductionist theory that presumes that a society's technology drives the development of its social structure



## Effective practices

There is a broad panorama of thought and action on effective practice in the use and appropriation of digital technology and social media in terms of creating an online identity, the development, reach and collective influence of social movements and organisations in the social and solidarity economy within Latin America.

A theoretical and empirical analysis of the areas where this effective practice takes place via Web 2.0/3.0 highlights these fields:

- a. Processes of interaction and democratic participation
- b. Political impact and influence in the public sphere
- c. Empowerment
- d. Right to exist, speak and be seen

## Processes of interaction and participation specific to Web 2.0/3.0

Thanks to the tools of Web 2.0, in today's network society (Castells, 2005) we see the conditions of a time and place specific to a third environment,<sup>3</sup> in which interactivity becomes relevant to analysis. According to Marí (2011), it can be placed analytically between two related terms, in the same way as interface and interaction.

On this point, Marí explains that "in interactivity we find a double perspective, communicative and political. This allows us to analyse how the potential of online communication is fulfilled, as well as the citizen participation that organisations promoting a certain webpage envision" (p.49).

This interactivity, challenging conditions of time and space, draws attention to the subject of the internet's sociability, the appropriation of which is essential to any social and personal interaction that takes place online.

3 Javier Echeverría, explained by Victor Marí Saéz (2011), proposes that "The environment... is that which surrounds our body or our view. It is the various means implemented to expand our immediate space. Information technologies make possible the construction of a third environment, structurally different from the first (E1, the natural environment, our own bodies) and the second (E2, a cultural and social environment, the urban environment)" (p.39).

## Political impact and influence in the public sphere

Today, we are clearly witness to a diverse, pluralistic public sphere, and even one that is more democratic in exercising the power of those within it. Credit for the construction of such a public sphere is mostly due to the internet and especially the various social media such as Facebook, YouTube, blogs etc. Valuing this causal link allows movements and organisations to revise their own political implications in their mission and vision statements.

In the course of the internet's development as the foremost information distribution system, we can see the evolution from the static, linear, vertical, unidirectional Web 1.0, via Web 2.0, widely recognised to be participative, interactive and even democratic, to the recent Web 3.0, billed as the semantic or personalised web.

Of all its manifestations, Web 2.0 has had the greatest impact on network society. Under this premise, analysis of the political and organisational dimensions of network society is based on the study of social movements and social and solidarity economy (SSE) organisations. In such studies, the relationship with social media "is shaped through what new technologies make possible, how they are appropriated and used (incorporating them into routine) and discourse, or discursive practice: the strictly political meaning of collectives" (Valderrama, 2008, p.96).

The conditions of interactivity, empowerment, participation, communication and those attributes of a network model previously stated, are relevant in addressing the political considerations of the use of Web 2.0. The matter of visibility becomes pertinent here, when dealing with the impact these organisations have in the public sphere through their use and appropriation of Web 2.0 resources.

## Empowerment and development

The participation and empowerment of users seem to be decisive in recognising the advantages and potential of the internet and social media, for example in the field of development. Web2forDev is described as follows, in edition no.59 of Participatory Learning and Action:

Web 2.0 for development – or Web2forDev for short – is a way of employing web services to intentionally improve

information-sharing and online collaboration for development. Web 2.0 presents us with new opportunities for change – as well as challenges – that we need to better understand and grasp. The authors share learning and reflections from practice and consider the ways forward for using Web 2.0 for development. [...] Web2forDev [...] is about the active use of these tools in development. It is about how development actors can relate and connect to other stakeholders, produce and publish their own material, decide on levels of access to information and redistribute pieces of content released by others. Web2forDev is about integrating, combining, aggregating, generating, moderating and mediating development information, ideas and perspectives (2009, p.10).

Analysis of the use of social networks specific to Web 2.0, and therefore the internet, is mediated by the characteristics of the network model. It is therefore possible to liken these social networks to networks of solidarity and communication, “organisational formulae which bring together important attributes on which to reflect: they possess a great deal of flexibility, horizontality, capacity for interconnection and closeness among members” (Marí, 2008, p.1347).

### **The right to exist, to speak and to be seen**

Hernán Rodríguez (2011) defines as the “rules of visibility” the different actions and strategies that eventually create multiple mechanisms for existing in other public spheres. He suggests that establishing these rules is viable if social movements draw up action plans in terms of three rights: the right to exist, the right to speak and the right to be seen. This also applies to SSE organisations.

The right to exist represents “the movement’s self-recognition of an identity, an adversary and a social objective, as a form of resistance towards the mechanisms of social control and political representation that have excluded them from the public sphere” (Rodríguez, 2011, p.144).

The right to speak is characterised by the construction and visibility both of the thematic and informative agendas put forward by social movements and of the mission and vision statements of SSE organisations, in an alternative sense of communication through Web 2.0/3.0. Commercial and mass media communication represent a political and economic elite, establishing an information hegemony; being aware of this, social movements and SSE organisations construct their

own informational conditions through their use of various networks and social media.

Rueda (2015) gives the example of the Social Movements Organisation in Brazil. Their objective is to create spaces for constructing agreements on social change, activities for organisations, sharing agendas, conflict methods and reactions against Neoliberalism and bourgeois hegemony, and for strengthening social movements. Rueda explains that Muniz, Pinho, Carvalho, Sávio, Araujo, Luchete and Agostino (2007) analysed the organisation and found that of the 75 social movements belonging to it, 42 promote their activities online on matters such as children and youth, services, health, popular economy, ethnicity, citizenship, education, work and workers, gender, the environment, and communication. The study concluded that these movements achieve cultural integration through their use of ICT and especially Web 2.0 but it also showed that there are limitations in technical understanding, qualified personnel and finances which hinder the intensive use of these technologies.

Rodríguez (2011) describes the right to be seen, representing the essence of physical interaction, as heralding not only self-recognition of this right by social movements and SSE organisations but also that they “are defining for themselves the situations in which the conditions for developing interactions are decided, which in this case point to their conquering of the public sphere by way of various ways of speaking, making themselves heard and being seen” (Rodríguez, 2011, p.151).

The internet represents all forms of human communication in a single medium but Web 2.0 has challenged our conditions of space and time, establishing new forms of sociability or new ways of being together (Martín-Barbero, 2008) in today’s network society.

In this context of technological determinism predicted by McLuhan, the actions of social organisations can now be based on the characteristics of the network model, and specifically on the use and appropriation of the multiple tools and resources offered by Web 2.0.

*Latin American perspectives written by Melba Quijano Triana, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Colombia, in collaboration with the York St John - Erasmus Social and Solidarity Economy Consortium*



## 2.2 PERSPECTIVES FROM UK, CANADA AND USA

The research-based literature dealing with this theme in English (principally taken from Canada, the US and the UK in this review) mainly examines the use of social media within 'non-profit' organisations. It also considers trading organisations in the social and solidarity economy, such as a credit union and fair trade organizations.

As Lewis (2005 in Nah and Saxton, 2012, p. 297) points out, in a non-profit organisation the ultimate strategic goal is the fulfilment of a social mission – the creation of value for the public and/or the environment. Here we will consider theoretical and evidence-based approaches for understanding the role and effective use of social media to achieve these goals, from the literature since 2009.

The following have been identified from the literature as areas of social media use relevant to organisations in the SSE:

- Building and engaging community (Deschamps and McNutt, 2014).
- Fundraising (Saxton and Wang, 2014).
- Advocacy efforts (Obar, 2014; Guo and Saxton, 2014).
- Accountability to stakeholders (Saxton and Guo, 2011)

### Building and engaging community

Deschamps and McNutt (2014) identify the activities in the online world as *bonding* (developing strong ties/strengthening existing relationships and strengthening the organisation's reputation) and *bridging* (developing weak ties/outreach and raising awareness) with its own members, and the organisation with the wider public - see Table 5.2

**TABLE 5.2 BRIDGING AND BONDING WITH SOCIAL MEDIA**

Bonding activities	Bridging activities
Recognising volunteers and staff	Recruiting staff, volunteers, members, customers
Recognising donors	Using social bookmarks on the organisation's website
Responding directly to user comments	Offering prizes and trivia questions
Highlighting offline activities	Policy-related information sharing
Mentioning partner or related organisations	Posting information on a weekly basis
Using the 'Causes' app to raise donor funds	Sharing inspirational quotations
	Using Facebook's 'Events' tool to remind followers of upcoming events

Adapted from Deschamps and McNutt (2014)

Deschamps and McNutt state that social networking sites (such as Facebook and Twitter) allow an organisation to share their mission, invite members to events, actively communicate with members, share information, post calls for volunteers, and undertake targeted fundraising activities successfully (2014, p.32).

Creating an engaged and committed community is vital when marketing products which command a premium price, such as fair trade goods. The main goals of fair trade organisations in using social media are to

increase exposure and visibility for the company, raise public awareness of fair trade, have a direct relationship with customers and create a faithful and engaged community. Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are used not to promote specific products, rather awareness is raised about the social justice aspect of fair trade and efforts (Fairtrade Connection, 2013).

A further example is the Travis Credit Union in California which in 2013 used a strategy to attract more members



for their ethically-driven financial services. The stages of their strategy can be seen in Table 5.3:

TABLE 5.3 TRAVIS CREDIT UNION SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY		
Stages	Planning and Activities	Goals achieved
1st	Establishing a goal of increasing the number of members who like the Credit Union on Facebook, by running an interactive game.	This increased their members on Facebook from 2,500 to over 12,000 within several months.
2nd	Their focus then shifted from gathering Facebook 'likes' to having more meaningful interactions with members and gaining their feedback.	The organization's member surveys revealed a loyalty score over 90 percent, and a significant portion of existing members would recommend the Credit Union to friends and family.
3rd	The sharing in the social space was seen as a natural extension of word-of-mouth recommendations	In 2013, 70 percent of their new members came from social media, such as Facebook

Adapted from Knudson (2013).

## The relevance of community

The presence of an engaged community is seen as a prerequisite for the following activities: fundraising, lobbying and advocacy, and accountability to stakeholders.

### Fundraising and crowdfunding

Non-profits are increasingly including social media in their fundraising efforts (Saxton and Wang, 2014, p.853), due the growing trend for online giving, and the potential to reach large audiences. Saxton and Wang explore how the "social network effect" (2014, p.850) facilitates new ways for fundraising on behalf of non-profits. They suggest that "attention-getting projects", "casual" and "impulse donating" are driving contributions to a greater extent than with offline donating. They point to the "echo chamber effect" (p.863) from delivering the same message through multiple social media channels: for example using and adapting the same content on Facebook, Twitter with a link to a web site, blog post or YouTube video. While the resources devoted to fundraising did make a significant difference, they found that small 'media-savvy' organisations have the potential to reach as wide an audience as larger ones through social media.

The power of clients' success stories told on blogs or YouTube and rebroadcast on other social media, were seen to be effective for fundraising, particularly if next to a Donate Now button (Given, Forcier and Rath, 2014).

Crowdfunding is identified as "a collective effort by people who network and pool their money together, usually via the Internet, in order to invest in and support efforts initiated by other people or organizations" (Ordanini *et al.*, 2011 cited by Stiver, Barroca, Minocha, Richards and Roberts, 2015, p.250). Organisations may have Donate Now buttons on their websites, or may use specific crowdfunding applications. Examples of sites operating within the social economy are Kiva.org, which is a US-based, non-profit organisation with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty and is international in its scope; and LocalGiving.com, dedicated to providing funding opportunities and advocacy for small charities and community groups in the UK.

Belleflamme, Lambert and Schwienbacher (2013) describe two types of crowdfunding which are relevant to ventures with a social mission: *reward-based* crowdfunding allows crowdfunders to receive a non-financial benefit in return to their financial contributions (e.g., credit on an album, pre-ordering of products or services); whereas in *donation-based* crowdfunding, crowdfunders make a donation without any tangible return (p.317).

### Advocacy

Non-profits have enormous potential to "contribute to democratic governance by representing the interests



of citizens and promoting changes in public policy” (Guo and Saxton, 2014, p.59).

Obar (2014) describes the perceptions of the benefits of social media for advocacy groups in Canada, including NGOs and activist organisations around themes such as the environment, health care and civil rights. Table 5.4 shows those which were perceived to be the most beneficial features, based on specific characteristics of social media. The most commonly used social media by these organisations were (i) Facebook (ii) Twitter (nearly all used these) (iii) YouTube (75% used this) and (iv) blogs (52% used these). Communication directors within the advocacy organisations ranked

social media technologies, based upon perceived ability to help facilitate advocacy-related tasks. As can be noted, email (a “traditional internet tool” rather than social media, according to Obar) and Facebook were preferred methods of communication. However, Obar notes that when the organisations were asked which technologies help with “reaching out to new people,” “giving citizens a place to voice their opinions” and “conversing with citizens”, Facebook always ranked first, Twitter second, ... suggesting that perhaps the advocacy community feels that social media technologies, as opposed to more traditional internet technologies like email, have enhanced their ability to accomplish these more interactive tasks (pp.220-221).

**TABLE 5.4 ADVOCACY GROUP PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES**

Perceived benefits	Aspects
<b>Outreach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate communication with larger numbers of individuals</li> <li>Ease of use</li> <li>Overcome the limitations of organization size and budget</li> </ul>
<b>Feedback loops</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate conversation</li> <li>Provide community-building opportunities not available via offline or other forms of online communication</li> </ul>
<b>Speed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate communication in real time</li> <li>Facilitate engagement as issues of interest are unfolding</li> </ul>

(Adapted from Obar, 2014, p.223)

## Accountability to stakeholders

Saxton and Guo (2011) discuss two dimensions of accountability: disclosure - the transparent provision of key information on organizational finances and performance; and dialogue - the solicitation of input from interactive engagement with core stakeholders (p.271). In relation to the potential for use of social media, the latter is more relevant, something for which the Web is particularly promising. The authors identify basic contact-us feedback, or ask-a-question features on a website. When it comes to higher-level mechanisms for solicitation of stakeholder engagement, such as online surveys, (for example, see Travis Credit Union example earlier in this chapter), interactive message forums, evaluation forms or needs assessments, Saxton and Guo conclude that community-level organisations, in particular, are “failing to maximize the opportunity to use [social media] to engage stakeholders” (p.287). The American Red Cross is cited by Briones, Kuch, Liu and Jin (2011)

as a non-profit organisation making effective use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to engage in a two-way conversation with its publics.

Organisations committed to deliberative democracy in governance, such as the FairShares Association, are working with Loomio free, collaborative software for collaborative decision-making and studying its potential to promote participatory decision-making (Ridley-Duff, 2015).

As democratic and participatory governance is a criterion used to define social/solidarity economy organisations, this appears to be an important area of study. The theme is taken up in the case study on the use of collaborative decision-making using Loomio, later in this chapter. A community of practice for practitioners and academics in the social and solidarity economy is discussed in Case study 2.



## Social media – a critical view

While the opportunities for wider participation, autonomy and greater visibility are present in social media, it needs to be remembered that no technology can overcome existing power structures in society, and can indeed reinforce them. Technology use is situated within its cultural context (Miller, 2013), currently one of global capitalism and high inequality of resource distribution. Social media platforms have different forms of ownership: some are free or operate on a non-profit basis (e.g. Wikipedia and Loomio request voluntary donations from their users). Ning is a private corporation which charges for its services. Others,

such as Facebook and Twitter, are private corporations which sell the data provided by users' 'activity work' for marketing purposes and make multi-million dollar profits, whilst arranging their tax affairs to ensure that very little of this profit returns to the public domain (Fuchs, 2014; Keen, 2015).

It is also important that organisations which exist for primarily social/environmental purposes critically reflect on their use of all available tools, including reflection on whether social media is the most effective tool to help them achieve their mission and enable the change they seek (Keen, 2015).

## 2.3 AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY RADIO

Community radio is a “two-way process ... in which communities participate as planners, producers and performers and it is the means of expression of the community rather than for the community.” (Onekutu, 2013, p. 267, citing AMARC, The World Association of Community Broadcasters, 1998). This Nigerian author argues that the AMARC definition emphasises participation for all in the entire process from the planning stage to evaluation. As well as being participatory in nature, community radio is development oriented.

The role of radio in development in general and in the developing world in particular, cannot be overstated, according to Magak, Kilonzo and Ogembo (2013, p.114). Despite the rapid growth in media technology such as mobile phones, it is widely acknowledged that radio is still the most easily accessible form of communication in Africa. This can be explained by its flexibility, low cost and oral character. It allows significant opportunities for local programming in local languages, in contrast to television, which depends largely on programmes produced for global consumption (Mano, 2011). In addition, most print media in Sub-Saharan Africa is published in colonial languages and is not effective in areas with low rates of literacy (Chibita, 2011, p.270).

Writing from South Africa, Gunner, Ligaga and Moyo (2011, p.5) state that radio must be seen as a process of culture involving an exchange of meanings among members of society rather than a mere instrument of power.

Democracy and development are central to discussions in the literature about community radio in Africa. Fundamental to democracy and development, and closely interlinked with them, are peace and gender equality. Therefore, the following will be considered in the sections below:

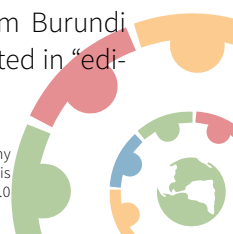
- a. democracy,
- b. development,
- c. peace, and
- d. gender equality

### Community radio for democracy

According to Onekutu (2013, p.267, citing Wanyeki, 2000), community radio seeks to foster debate about, reach consensus on and build democratic solidarity in promoting and protecting human rights and achieving sustainable development including peace and reconciliation.

A key advantage of community radio is that it provides a platform for debate and exchange of ideas (AMARC, 1998). It is seen as addressing “knowledge-power imbalances and permits the voiceless and marginalized access to the media” (Mhiripiri, 2011, p.109). However, numbers of broadcasts alone are not sufficient to guarantee this. The ideal of community radio is that “each citizen, however poor, should have access to broadcast information from which he or she can make choices” (Mhiripiri, 2011, p.110, citing Hills, 2003).

Ojebode (2013) points to an example from Burundi where community radio stations collaborated in “edi-



torial solidarity” (p.16) and deployed election monitors which reportedly contributed to transparent elections. Space was provided for political debates among different groups in Cape Verde. And in the same country a community radio mobilised the participation of citizens in drawing up municipal budgets (p.16-17).

Commonalities around democracy involve “self-determination, periodic elections, citizens’ engagement, and ongoing deliberations facilitated by an expanding access to means of expression” (Ojebode, 2013, p. 15). However, some governments on the continent have been far from enthusiastic supporters of radio which opens up political debate. For example, the Zambian government has given a number of community radio licences to groups which are unlikely to use the medium to discuss politics and were seen as “harmless” to government interests (Moyo, 2011, p.50). Javuru (2012) identifies a “political environment that builds a media atmosphere of fear and self-censorship” in East Africa (p.289).

### Ownership of the radio station

As well as providing content which aims to promote access to information and space for dialogue, the ownership and management of the radio station itself are key to ensuring it reflects the concerns of the community.

AMARC (1998) contends that for a station to qualify as a community radio, the ownership and control of the station must rest with the community it claims to serve. This will normally be through a trust or association. Ownership is critical to the concept of ideal community radio, and of radio’s ability to facilitate community development, according to Mhiripiri (2011). The dynamics of participation and ownership are seen as “indicators of social change and development which correlate with progressive social transformation within the community” (2011, p.110, citing Solenvicens and Plauher, 2007).

The significant role of aid organisations is also acknowledged: in particular, the Catholic Church (Mhiripiri, 2011), UNESCO and NGOs (Da Costa, 2012, p.4; Javuru, 2012, p.289). However, in order to achieve “social sustainability” (Da Costa, 2012, p. 6) the station needs to be managed by the community, and its operations should rely mainly on the community’s own resources (p.3). To be true to the values of community radio, it needs to be managed and controlled “by a board which must be democratically elected, from

members of the community in the licensed geographic area” (South African Government, 1999).

Some stations in East Africa view community participation as a consultative process and have “networks of listeners’ clubs who meet and deliberate on issues to be broadcast”. However, there is seen to be a tension between inclusion of the community and professionalism of the service (Javuru, 2012, pp.293 - 294).

Ojebode (2013) argues that not all claiming to be ‘community radio’ is true to its fundamental principles. He describes as “disturbing” the state-owned and private and commercial radio stations “disguised as community radio”. Indeed, they are often registered under the name of community radio and enjoy legal concessions as such, whilst existing to “support the financial and political ambitions of their founders” (p.13).

### Community radio for development

Adegbola and Oyedele (2013) view community radio as the right of a community to “freedom of expression” (p.291). They give an overview of notable examples of significant contribution of community radio to community life. In Ghana, they include Radio Ada which safeguards the rights of minorities and women, provides weather reports for fishermen and information on security and cooperation at sea. It teaches the Dangme language and recounts the history of the community to young people, reinforcing cultural and social values; and Radio Peace promotes health and sanitation and economic development. In South Africa, Bush Radio promotes economic development, dialogue and conflict resolution and crime prevention (p.291).

Ojebode (2013, p.14 drawing upon United Nations, 2006) finds some common ground in discussion and practice of development. He argues it is about improvement in people’s lives, including their standard of living and their capacity to take informed decisions; their cultural integrity and their fundamental human rights, including freedom from poverty and want and fear of insecurity. It is also about using resources so that future generations have their share. He argues that however one measures development, the impact of community radio on this has been demonstrable in Africa (2013, p.11).

The following example from Magak, et al. (2013, pp.114-136) discusses Radio Lake Victoria in Kenya,



a Luo language radio station run by a community development non-governmental organisation called Osienala (Friends of Lake Victoria). They highlight the potential for community radio to work hand-in-hand with 'on the ground' development work. The NGO initially used radio to communicate its work and ideas to the target community and became "an indispensable development tool" (p.123). It became a focal point for community links and an advocacy centre. Their "openness" (p.123) gained trust from local communities and international research groups, and collaborations include the Global Nature Fund, Living Lakes Network and the International Lake Environment Committee, Japan. Originally funded through Finnish donors, it is sustained by advertisements and NGO-sponsored development programmes. It targets 4.9 million Luo-speaking people in Kenya and Tanzania. The radio has played a significant role in promoting environmental management, linking its programming to projects with environmental objectives. The radio has used its programming to promote access to micro-finance, again, linking this to a specific project for provision of financial services for the fishing community. It has been instrumental in the promotion of renewable energy, in awareness and advocacy for change in gender equality, in sharing of agricultural practices for higher productivity, in the expansion of eco-tourism practices, in giving information about community health and hygiene, particularly in relation to HIV/AIDS, and in honouring language and cultural practices which have been considered inferior to those of the British colonisers. "Used for good the communicative power of indigenous language and ... radio is a potent force ... the result is the rapid community development being witnessed" (p.134).

### Community radio for peace

Broadcasting for peace is considered a vital role for community radio in a continent with countries and regions comprising culturally diverse populations and "bedevilled with local and internal tensions," according to Nigerian writers Oyero, Joshua and Aduradola (2013, p. 94). They argue that the media plays a key role in agenda-setting by assigning importance and broadcast time to some issues over others. Peace journalism seeks to identify issues underlying the conflict, "highlighting common ground and linking people of good will in the belligerent communities" (p. 107, citing Opubor, 2012). Skilled journalists need a deep understanding of culturally-based forms of reconciliation. Oyero

et al. (2013, p.108) identify values being espoused on indigenous communication channels, such as generosity, forgiveness and compassion. They note how indigenous healing, reconciliation and justice methods promoted the reintegration of child soldiers into their communities in Mozambique and have strengthened solidarity in post-genocide Rwanda.

The other side of this coin is *hate radio*, privately owned radio stations representing narrow, exclusive interests (and by criteria given above, not community radio) which is blamed for stirring up tensions and inciting violence in Rwanda and Kenya (see, for example, Straus, 2011; and Javuru, 2012), illustrating the agenda-setting and legitimising power of radio for good or ill on the continent.

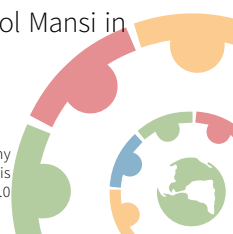
### Community radio for gender equality and empowerment of women

Women have been traditionally excluded from roles in society, particularly those involving the exercise of power, and are more likely than men to suffer marginalisation through poverty, according to Duru, Nwosu and Onyejelem (2013). They highlight the need to pay particular attention to the inclusion of women in community radio, as both "gatekeepers and newsmakers" (p.159): as those who influence decisions about which stories are worthy of inclusion, and as protagonists in the stories.

Emancipation and self-worth is a key advantage of community radio (AMARC,1998). When eliciting information from community groups in Kenya and Tanzania about the impact of community radio on their lives, women's empowerment was a recurring theme (Onekutu, 2013). This included the ability of women to voice their issues and concerns, gender equality including the attitude to the education of the daughters of Masai communities, improved health among women, and increased awareness of human rights, especially the rights of women. She quotes a woman in Ivingoni village in Kenya:

The radio has created a very good feel about ourselves – I am saying this with particular reference to the status of women in our community. We might not be rich or powerful .... However, we have all of a sudden gained recognition, starting from family and household level all the way up to district and national levels (pp.273-274).

The themes developed in this literature review are exemplified by the case study about Radio Sol Mansi in Guinea Bissau later in this chapter.



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### 3. DIALOGICAL SECTION

Following information gained from a questionnaire and interviews, web page links to social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn were explored. Altogether 329 web pages were visited from countries in Latin America (148), Europe (170) and Africa (11).<sup>4</sup>

Given that, according to the literature, social media promotes “new ways of being together”, and that a community is essential for this, evidence of the presence of a community was sought in the use made of social media by organisations, as a sign of potential effective practice. This included recent and regular activity, such as recent posts with information and evidence of the engagement of community. The number of ‘followers’ (Twitter), ‘likes’ (Facebook), ‘views’ (YouTube) ‘endorsements’ (LinkedIn) were understood as potential signs of this. Evidence of activity around individual posts, such as ‘retweets’ and ‘likes’ was also gathered, as potential evidence of participation by a ‘community’. The use of blogs was examined for their potential reach and relevance to target communities. Where possible, short interviews were carried out to establish the organisation’s purpose in their use of social media and their understanding of its usefulness

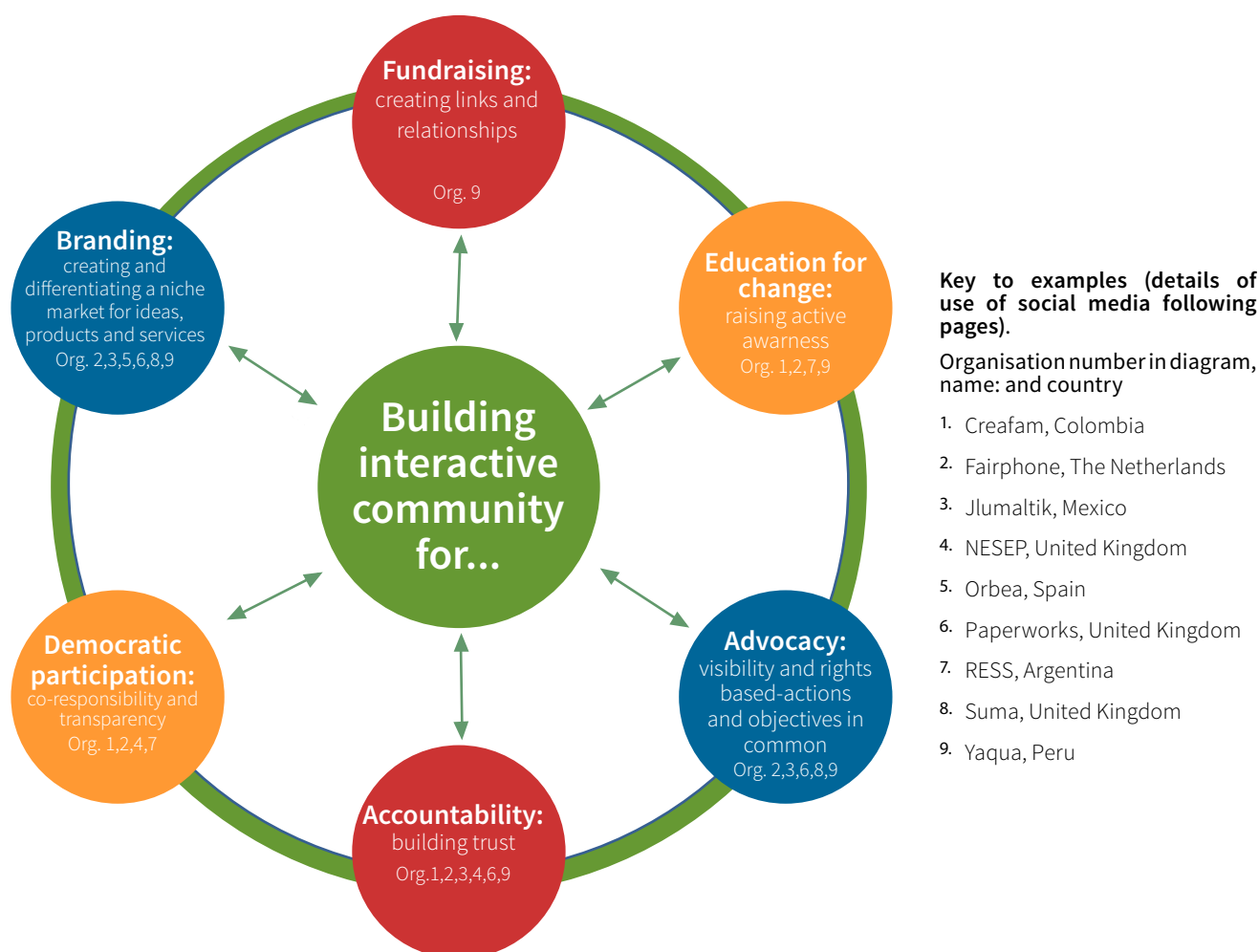
and impact. From this, examples were selected that illustrated practices from which other organisations in the social and solidarity economy could learn.

Nine organisations were chosen to exemplify building and engaging community towards the aims of the organisation, and therefore able to offer pointers towards effective practice. In this selection, a variety of organisations was sought in terms of: geographical spread, legal status of organisation (e.g. cooperatives, social enterprises, NGOs, etc.), sector of activity and use of social media. These are discussed in this section and in the Practical Cases section.

Some organisations in the study are successfully building and engaging communities. This is the lynchpin of effective social media activity of the organisations in the study. Echoing the purposes of social media use explained in the UK, Canada and USA literature review. Figure 5.1 shows the use being made of social media where there was evidence of active engagement by a community. It highlights the potential benefits of social media use where there is clear evidence of active involvement by a community.

<sup>4</sup> Note: the geographical scope of the study meant that some organisations were based in remote rural areas where there was no internet. In these regions, community radio was often an important way of communicating.



**FIGURE 5.1**
**POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE WITH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**


In reality, the uses highlighted in Fig. 5.1 are interlinked. In the following section, the uses made of social media by specific organisations will be shown.

Much of the literature discussed earlier in the chapter referred to non-profits, in which fundraising from donors is a critical issue. In this study organisations ranging from donor-funded NGOs to cooperatives with fully self-generated income from trading were studied. Therefore, social media activity which may promote strong branding and gain more customers was considered by the Consortium.

Education for change has been added because organisations in the social and solidarity economy are often selling goods and services which attract a premium price because the full social and environmental cost is built in to the product instead of being left for others (e.g. local communities,

governments) to pick up. Therefore, education about the way in which the product is bringing about change needs to be communicated. An example is Fairphone in the Netherlands, which is working towards creating an ethical supply chain in mobile phone manufacture. In other cases, education is helpful to explain the workings of the organisation. The cooperative Creafam in Colombia has videos on YouTube to demonstrate how *one person one vote* works in a cooperative, and thus demonstrates democratic ways of running a cooperative.

Visibility of the organisations, their beneficiaries and their aims was a clear outcome of social media use, and was a recurrent theme in this study. This is not considered as a separate category. It is taken as being more likely in an active online community. It has implications for accountability and making the work of the organisation more transparent to supporters

and other stakeholders. Some organisations used this enthusiastically as a way of showcasing their work. For example, trainees in the UK printer and mail fulfilment service provider, Paperworks, wrote on

the organisation's blog and were thus able to show development of their interests and communication skills.

## Strategies for using social media by organisations in the social and solidarity economy

The following examples illustrate four practical strategies used by organisations in the study for using social media towards fulfilling their aims and values.

### Strategy 1: Brand recognition through links with other networks

**TABLE 5.5 ORGANISATIONS DEVELOPING BRAND RECOGNITION THROUGH LINKS WITH OTHER NETWORKS**

Name Legal form Website	Aims/values	Country	Sector	Social medium
Suma Cooperative www.suma.coop	We are against poverty and human suffering. We want a sustainable future for people and our planet. We care about animal welfare. We believe in eating a healthy diet	UK	Retail and distribution of wholefoods	Blog
Orbea Cooperative www.orbea.com	Orbea is more than a bike company, we are a cooperative business and passionate family.	Spain	Bike manufacturers	Twitter
Yaqua Social enterprise yaqua.pe	Dedicated to the commercialisation of bottled water. 100% of the dividends finance projects for drinking water in vulnerable parts of the country.	Peru	Sale of bottled water to finance access to water projects.	YouTube Facebook

### Suma: Reaching the vegetarian community through recognised networkers

**Suma** has an invited network of recognised and successful vegetarian bloggers who create recipes and comment on ethical issues related to food. The cooperative supplies the bloggers in its network with products for free every two months. In return the bloggers create a recipe using some of the ingredients sent. The blogs are featured on Suma's website and each recipe created is featured on Suma's Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest pages. The recipes can be viewed in full on each of the bloggers' own blogs. This is a

win-win situation: Suma gets valuable publicity for its products within vegetarian networks and builds its brand. In addition, the blogs are promoting the vegetarian and food security and sustainability agenda, causes advocated by Suma. The bloggers themselves get free products to be creative with and at the same time gain exposure for their blogs by linked to Suma. The *social capital* based on shared values extends the reach of the cooperative and the bloggers. As Bob Cannell, member of the cooperative explains, "We find out some of these amazing recipes that they come up with. We're constantly pumping out recipes for our customers and consumers, which then helps us".



Orbea: Positioning the brand and building strong social capital

Orbea started its Twitter presence by searching for cycling enthusiasts on Twitter and following over 150 of them. The cooperative then posted a video and began retweeting the tweets of the individuals and organisations it was following. They quickly established an online presence as passionate cyclists. In June 2015 the cooperative had nearly 20,000 followers. It had posted over 8,000 tweets and retweets. The account is dynamic with photos of epic cycling activities and cycling news. It is a community of cycling enthusiasts and positions Orbea as a leader in this field.

Yaqua: Using humour and a competition to raise awareness of the product

Yaqua launched a competition in which participants could send a video of themselves eating extremely spicy and hot food. The challenge was to continue until they needed to drink from the bottle of Yaqua water. The videos were placed on YouTube and Facebook. Some celebrities were enlisted to create videos once the competition was launched. The videos attracted over 75,000 visits on YouTube with 1500 likes or comments, and had 92 shares on Facebook. There were 50 con-

testants in the competition and 3 winners. The campaign was also covered by newspapers.

What can be learnt from these examples?

Find established networkers in the field and be part of their community in a reciprocal way.

Both Suma and Orbea have identified respected networkers in their respective fields and have engaged with them, benefitting from and contributing to the community of enthusiasts. The exposure this gives each organisation brand recognition with enthusiasts.

... and reach beyond those already interested

Yaqua have reached out beyond those likely to be actively involved in the issue of accessible drinking water for communities living in conditions of poverty, and have raised awareness of it. Their campaign, using the slogan “Quench your thirst by helping, has been particularly amongst young people.

Social and solidarity economy organisations can showcase their work to the public through social media, and in this way they can invite scrutiny, feedback and promote transparency.

Strategy 2: Using photos and actively seeking the participation of supporters to promote the visibility of the organisations

TABLE 5.6 USING PHOTOS AND ACTIVELY SEEKING THE PARTICIPATION OF SUPPORTERS TO PROMOTE THE VISIBILITY OF THE ORGANISATION				
Name Legal form Website	Aim	Country	Sector	Social medium
Jlumaltik  Cooperative  www.jlumaltik.com	Promote, recognise and make known artisanal work. We organise and distribute work in a fair way.	Mexico	Creation and retail of artisanal goods	Facebook

Jlumaltik: Giving visibility to artisanal products to create new markets.

The organisation promotes the production of artisanal goods from the Mayan cultures of Chiapas. Through their Facebook page the organisation gives visibility to the work of the Mayan craftswomen. The **Jlumaltik Cooperative** in Mexico, which promotes

indigenous Mayan artisanal goods, posts a picture on Facebook of a product or of a cooperative member weaving or creating other artisanal works every 3-4 days. A caption explains what the product is and the indigenous tradition it follows. It also gives details of a venue where the item can be purchased if it is outside the main shop. The organisation has over 1000 likes on Facebook and the posts received comments of appreciation of the products and the cultural



importance of these, as well as questions of a purely commercial nature. The Facebook account is very visual – few words are needed as the photographs are highly colourful and attractive.

### What can be learnt from this example?

Use photos, actively encourage supporters to spread the word, enable people to take action.

Taking photographs which highlight the central activities and mission of the organisation can easily be

placed on Facebook with brief captions to highlight the relevance of the photo to (potential) supporters. Promoting the Facebook page at ‘real world’ events, etc. and specifically asking supporters to ‘like’, ‘share’ with friends and comment on the post expands the reach of the organisation. This, combined with the opportunity to take action, such as information on how to make a purchase, volunteer or take part in an event, can support the creation of a community with wide reach.

## Strategy 3: Educating about the organisation through members of the ‘real world’ community

**TABLE 5.7 EDUCATING ABOUT THE ORGANISATION THROUGH MEMBERS OF THE ‘REAL WORLD’ COMMUNITY**

Name Legal form Website	Aims/values	Country	Sector	Social medium
Creafam Cooperative www.creafam.com	We promote the development of the economic possibilities of our associates and their families.	Colombia	Finance	YouTube
Paperworks Social enterprise www.paperworks.org.uk	Offers training to help people towards work.	UK	Services – printing and direct mailing	Blog

### Creafam: Developing the family economy through savings and access to loans

In addition to building its community through Facebook and Twitter, **Creafam** (creamfam.com) has a YouTube channel on which it has videos containing personal testimonies from people whose lives have been changed through access to savings and loans from Creafam. It also has a video of a General Assembly meeting, showing, for example, how representatives from all branches are informed about their legal responsibilities. Their video to celebrate 20 years since its founding attracted over 400 views. Creafam are operating in an environment in which many people do not have access to financial services and there is little opportunity for structured savings or responsible lending. By having video testimonies of people who have benefitted from these services, Creafam is promoting community opportunity and development. Posting a video of a General Assembly meeting promotes transparency in an environment in which financial services are not trusted.

### Paperworks: Communicating interests and experiences at work

The **Paperworks** blog is almost entirely populated by blogs from trainees. Trainees are supported to write a blog about a whole range of things – everything from a volunteer placement they have been to or the fact they have started at Paperworks, a job they happen to be working on, or a training session. It started when Paperworks ran a ‘writing for a purpose’ course with the Local Authority and one of the trainees wrote a post on the Paperworks blog about a hobby. As Damien Handslip, manager of Paperworks, explains, “It gives everyone a voice. It’s also great for keeping people up to date with what we do, especially if people have got pictures on there as well. It explains things much better than we can do in any marketing literature.” In addition it “gives that voice, feedback. It’s sometimes difficult to get trainees to say what is it they are interested in. We get some ideas of what people are keen on and not so keen on through their blog posts”. It also serves to tell people about the trainees at Paperworks and the progress they’ve made while they have been there.



Damien believes it “gives a real insight into the ethos of the organisation”.

### What can be learnt from these examples?

The organisation can provide and curate a social media platform to highlight the experiences of its target group. Members/beneficiaries can tell the story of the organisation, to explain what they do and why it is different, and to reach a wide audience with this. Videos and blogs can be powerful media for empowering members, sharing their experiences and (sometimes indirectly) promoting the organisation.

In the case of Creafam these videos, which feature members of the cooperative, have been professionally made. As part of its training programme, Paperworks

have provided support for trainees to write on issues of their choice and to share this with the organisation’s customers and supporters.

Where members of a community have particular knowledge and experience to share, the organisation could invite them to create their own material, with the organisation acting as curator and disseminator of this material. Examples might include environmental or heritage skills, personal stories of transformation, etc.

In the case study on Social and Solidarity Economy Network (RESS) from Argentina, later in this chapter, it will be shown how the Network acts as a curator for material provided by its members.

## Strategy 4: Using the online community to inform the future plans of the organisation

**TABLE 5.8 USING THE COMMUNITY TO INFORM FUTURE STRATEGY OF THE ORGANISATION**

Name Legal form Website	Aims/values	Country	Sector	Social medium
Fairphone  Social enterprise  www.fairphone.com	Making a positive impact across the value chain	Netherlands/ international	Electronics	Survey Monkey

### Fairphone: Transparency and the importance of developing products with customers

Social media use is based on ‘joining the movement’. Fairphone’s blog has photos, videos and explanations of visits to mining regions in Africa where the mining activity does not create conflict and which cause least environmental damage. It has a highly active Facebook, Twitter and blog presence which educates, advocates, positions the ethos of the organisation in the market and is highly transparent and accountable in its provision of information. Notably, it uses social media to understand its community. Fairphone used Survey Monkey, an online survey, to gain information about those who purchased its phone. See: <https://www.fairphone.com/2014/08/07/community-personas-and-survey-results/>

What is the role of the University in the study and practice of the social and solidarity economy, according to the information in this chapter?

- The curriculum should include opportunities to use social media and opportunities to think critically about its use and impact in the sector.
- There should be the opportunity to learn about management of social media applications
- The university should offer access to social media for teaching and practical sessions so that they can be embedded into the curriculum
- Projects can be designed which create communities of teachers and students interested in developing new platforms for interaction in the sector which deal with the needs of the social and solidarity economy, e.g. crowdfunding, access to markets, ethical positioning of organisations.
- Through social media, links can be made between universities and organisations in the social and



solidarity economy, as a means of the mutual sharing of knowledge and experiences

### What can be learnt from this example?

Your community supports your aims. Take them into account to develop your product or service.

A great opportunity that social media provides is to understand the supporting community and use the information to inform the development of the product or service. Fairphone can gain some understanding of their customers and supporters through 'real world' events and social media. Using a survey to gain key data about who customers are enables them to create profiles of users and market accordingly. In the spirit of the transparency of Fairphone as an organisation, this

information is placed on the website and feedback invited.

### Conclusion

What do we understand by the effectiveness of use of social media within the SSE organizations surveyed and interviewed?

This study concludes that there are three aspects to effective practice:

- Organisations in the social and solidarity economy are driven by a social mission. Therefore, any consideration of effective practices in the use of social media needs to be underpinned by these values.



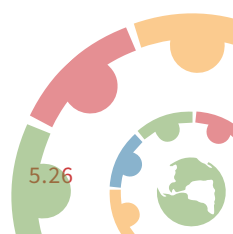
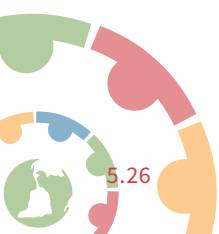
**FIGURE 5.2 EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN THE SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY**

- Social media is a tool, and like any other tool it has characteristic features which can be utilised by the user towards particular ends. Social media use which uses the opportunities for interaction, for access to knowledge and the management of it, etc. may fulfil one aspect of effective practice.
- The activity itself will involve community building and engagement for a purpose. Understanding this purpose and working accordingly with the social media application is a necessary third aspect of effective practice. This may coincide with 'real world' activities, such as face-to-face events.

This study argues that where these three aspects coincide, the possibility of practice being effective in

promoting the aims and mission of the organisation are high. This is represented in Figure 5.2

Where accounts are active, typical use in Europe and Latin America is to show the organisation's activities with photos on Facebook and highlight issues of interest or concern based upon the organisation's mission. However, some organisations do this with little evidence of an online community being engaged. Social media has the advantage that this material can be easily edited and updated without the need for a web designer, but the opportunities for outreach to a community offered by social media are not being exploited.



## 4. PRACTICAL CASES

### 4.1 THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY AND EDUCATION NETWORK (RESS), ARGENTINA

#### Rational objectives:

- Identify ways in which social media can be used to create an online community of practice.
- Examine the principles guiding horizontal administration of an education network related to the social and solidarity economy.
- Analyse the factors that help build an active community of practice.

#### Experiential objective:

- Evaluate the potential for participative democracy through social media.

#### Context

The International Social and Solidarity Economy and Education network (RESS) <http://educacionyeconomiasocial.ning.com/> is made up of organisations and members from Ecuador, Brazil, Bolivia, Cuba, Colombia, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Mexico, Venezuela, France, Spain, Nicaragua, UK and Argentina. It began on 26th June 2010 with a group of teachers/educators of adults on the Social Economics for Community Development and Work course, part of the university outreach department, and under the banner of the Self-Organised Work project <http://proyectotrabajaotogestionado.blogspot.com.ar/>

It is co-ordinated by the Social Outreach section of the Outreach Department at the National University of Quilmes in Buenos Aires, Argentina.<sup>5</sup>

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Claudio Nascimento: Moderator RESS. Intellectual, autodidact, popular educator, Brazil - claudan@terra.com.br

Natalia Lindel: Moderator RESS. Teacher/Director self-managed work project UNQ, Argentina. Occupational therapist - taaocupacional@hotmail.com

Maribeth Diaz Charry: Teacher/Lawyer, Colombia - maribeth.diaz.charry@gmail.com



The aim of the RESS is to provide tools for training, workshops and meeting points for reflection. It is built and run by educators, communicators, teachers, trainers, social activists and the general public. The RESS has more than 4000 members, who manage the network and can each be involved as much or as little as they wish by posting, debating, sharing anything related to the social and solidarity economy. Everything uploaded to the network is published and the collaborative moderation committee highlights and shares the discussions and messages posted by members.

#### Content

##### Operating principles of the network

The network is based on five central operating principles:

- Participation and dialogue,
- Visibility,
- Common good,
- Decommmercialisation,
- Voluntary and collaborative work.

*Participation and dialogue:* It is a space with no restrictions; anyone who is online can be involved. Anyone can post their publications, work, videos, or tools for use in different activities. Interacting on a global level allows for creating partnerships, face-to-face meetings and collaborative work with other networks and socioeconomic spaces. The visibility of what is published is regulated by participation, since the videos that appear on the site and are shared the most will be the ones that get the most views. The chat

forum is online but countless conversations take place away from that platform too.

*Visibility:* The network makes visible that which does not have legitimate parameters, helping us learn to recognise the invisible and reclaim what exists in multiple forms (photos, songs, music) or is classed as backward or inferior compared to the dominant classifications.

*Common good:* Pursuing the common good is the objective of everything that is published. This means it belongs to everyone and is for the use of the community, not for the benefit of individuals or organisations.

*Decommercialisation:* Rather than being designed for buying and selling, the network, in Laville's (2004) terms, creates reciprocity - giving to those in need, or simply giving because someone in the online community will give back when necessary, to support the very fabric of symmetrical, social ties, and not expecting anything in return. This leads to redistribution, since knowledge and understanding are gathered for distributing in a way that preserves social cohesion and diversity, but from a socially and ecologically sustainable base, without inequality or discrimination.

*Voluntary and collaborative work:* The moderating committee carries out unpaid, collaborative work, and is maintained by professionals communicating with one another, sending work and gathering volunteers and university students with a spirit of solidarity. The general coordinators help to highlight the most visited posts and to strengthen links to similar groups with a national and international reach.

### **Intellectual and social capital of the network**

1200 photos and 300 videos have been posted about self-management in reclaimed business and self-built residence cooperatives, covering fair trade, barter, social currency, public audiences in the solidarity economy, self-managed cultural communities, fights to defend the earth, water and forests.

There are 646 topics on the forum on, for example, decolonial thinking, depatriarchalisation, feminist economies, school qualifications, agroecology and farming colleges, studies and surveys of community economies. Each topic includes a space for exchange

and discussion. It is an open forum where everyone's questions, comments, opinions and criticisms are welcome.

There are 500 blog posts and 370 events about campaigns, seminars, postgraduate degrees, in-person and online "Alternative Economics" courses, interculturality, Latin American and European conferences on social finance, agroecology, degrowth, good living, and dialogue workshops on knowledge, education and alternative markets.

"Alternative Economics" contains freely available books by authors such as Manfred Max-Neef (Chile), José Luis Coraggio (Argentina), Marcos Arruda (Brasil) and Luis Razeto (Chile-Italia), on specific topics around social currency and a solidarity market e.g. Horacio Machado Araoz (Argentina) on the commercialisation of nature.

"Alternative Education" contains work on: *Zapatismo* and autonomous education, political training in Latin American popular movements by Claudia Korol (Argentina), technology and working as an association by Pedro Cunca Bocayuva (Brazil), and more.

The Argentine 'Towards an Alternative Economy' forum, a multi-stakeholder space for leaving comments and downloading work materials, brings together organisations, universities, local governments and various socio-economic movements with the aim of building public policy from the perspective of different experiences and viewpoints. Since 2010, more than 12,000 participants have debated in workshops, working committees, round tables, panels, fairs, and gatherings both locally and nationally. Work then began on the proposal for a national social economy bill.

*Revista ES* (Social Economy Magazine) is a quarterly magazine on the Social Economy that reclaims knowledge of self-management and associations. It is written by self-managed workers (whether they are building housing or producing healthy food), researchers and academics working towards science and technology that benefits good living, or self-employed artists who independently collaborate in the development of communities. The magazine is compiled by a participatory Editorial Team from across the Buenos Aires province and beyond: Community cultural producer, Culebrón Timbral, in Moreno; the Workers Solidarity Union cooperative in Wilde; the

Housing and Consumer cooperative in Quilmes; the Civil Association BePe in Catamarca Province; El Luchador bar in the city of Rosario; the Self-Organised Work project at the National University of Quilmes; the Civil Association Taa; the Latin American School of Social Economics, and more. Previous editions are free to download: <http://educacionyeconomiasocial.ning.com/page/revista-es-1>

### Sustainability of the project

The project's sustainability is evidenced by the cooperation among those involved, visible and collective actions and relatively autonomous workers. It also collaborates in the development of

other innovative forms of production, distribution, exchange and consumption with a social value that recognises these as legitimate and socially valuable ways of organising work in response to socio-cultural needs and the common good. For Coraggio (2009), "... sustainability depends as much on factors that cannot be reduced to economic value, like public policy, the quality of cooperation and coordination networks in a workers' sector relatively autonomous from capital, the legal definition of quality of life, the correlation of strengths, as it does on the willingness and capacity of individual and collective key figures involved in this context development."

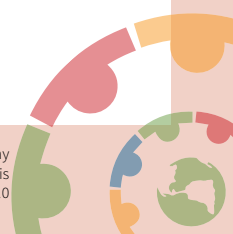
### Questions for dialogue and proposals for action

- Explore the website and identify resources, materials, books and comments about or related to the social and solidarity economy in your country.
- Organise a meeting to present and discuss your findings.
- Make a strategy for sharing materials (with the necessary permission) so the social and solidarity economy in your country is visible through a forum.

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Practical case created by Mag.Claudia Alvarez, Lic.Natalia Lindel, Lic.Alejandro Tombesi, Lic. Mariela Carassai, RESS, in collaboration with the York St John-Erasmus Social and Solidarity Economy Consortium



## 4.2 NORTH EASTERN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (NESEP), UK



### Rational objectives:

- To identify ways in which social media can be used to promote participatory governance and decision-making.
- To analyse factors which can lead to effective decision-making in an organisation

### Experiential objective:

- To be aware of the challenges and opportunities provided by collaborative software to promote a culture of participation within organisations.

### Context

#### NESEP

The North East Social Enterprise Partnership represents and promotes social enterprise in the North East region. It is working to deliver positive economic, social and environmental change. NESEP is run by social enterprises for social enterprises. [www.nesep.org](http://www.nesep.org)

### Content

#### The Annual General Meeting (AGM)

For the 2015 annual general meeting, NESEP decided to hold a 'Digital AGM'. In a document placed on the NESEP website the process was explained to members:

The Digital AGM is like a conventional AGM, but conducted entirely online. It takes place on a website, where, over several days, members can use a simple message board function to discuss items on the agenda, and then vote on those items where voting is necessary. Like any AGM, documentation is circulated in advance in the formal notice period, and motions by members can be tabled for discussion at the AGM.

See <http://nesep.co.uk/nesep-digital-agm-2015/>

The AGM was available for members to enter and participate digitally over four days. Discussions were ongoing and asynchronous (i.e. not live), in the form of online messaging boards for 72 hours and voting on resolutions taking place in the last 24 hours. This gave all members the opportunity to 'drop-in' at a time of their convenience, contribute to the written discussion and vote.

The Chairman of NESEP, Bob Stoate, identified some of the factors behind the change from face-to-face to a digital AGM. Firstly, it was a matter of promoting a greater presence at the AGM by its members. NESEP is a membership organisation and a company limited by guarantee (a UK legal form for a social enterprise), so its AGM is a crucial tool for the membership to get involved with decision-making and all issues of participatory governance. However, NESEP's membership covers quite a large geographical area, and so in the past it had been difficult to find a location convenient for all members in terms of location and accessibility. Secondly, there were environmental and economic benefits to using the system by removing the need to hire a venue, for people to travel there, to print reams of agendas and so on. Thirdly, the issue of participatory decision-making was highlighted. As Bob explained, "We were aware that this approach could mitigate the risk of 'strong personalities' dominating, which is always a danger at large group meetings and events: e.g. those who would not normally be confident speaking in public could feasibly have more opportunity to contribute", adding that care needed to be taken not to perpetuate the myth that the web is some kind of ideological 'blank space' where privilege and disadvantage are levelled out.

A provisional agenda was circulated previously and available on NESEP's website. It contained only the

formalities of the AGM, such as consideration of the accounts presented by the Board of Directors. As this was the first Digital AGM, the agenda was deliberately left as open as possible to provide memberships with a real opportunity to contribute. All non-statutory business at the meeting was characterised as ‘special’. The final agenda contained motions put forward by members, and would be discussed concurrently, with members contributing to any online discussion as they wished. A ‘Free Discussion’ area was also created for people to discuss matters not directly related to the agenda.

NESEP used the free, collaborative software called Loomio for their Digital AGM.

### About Loomio



Taken from [www.loomio.org/about](http://www.loomio.org/about)

### Our story

Loomio is an online tool for group decision-making. It allows dispersed groups to reach decisions quickly and take constructive action. It emerged from the need for a scalable way to make inclusive group decisions during the Occupy Movement in 2011.

We experienced the transformative potential of collaborative decision-making, as well as its severe limitations: if people have to be in the same place at the same time to participate, it can never scale. We set out to build a solution to this problem: using the Internet to give people an easy way to make good decisions together, wherever they are. It's called Loomio, like a loom for weaving diverse perspectives together.

### Mission

We're a mission-driven organisation with a social purpose at our core: Loomio exists to make it easy for anyone, anywhere, to participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We measure our impact in the numbers of people and groups involved in decisions AND the inspiring stories from people using it to do great things in their communities.

### What difference did holding a Digital AGM make?

Around 40 people took part in the AGM – a higher turnout than for their face-to-face AGMs.

While most of the discussion was around the fundamental business of an AGM (examining and signing off organisational accounts, electing directors, etc.) there was some useful discussion around things like NESEP's strategic plan (which had, notably, been shaped by consultation with the members throughout its development). Bob explained, “The most interesting thing we witnessed was the genuine shaping of a major organisational decision purely through use of the Loomio system. A resolution was tabled (on changing NESEP's name), but through discussion, the members present disagreed with the resolution, and ultimately voted not to pass it. Most significantly, the original proposer also changed their position as a result of the discussion”. The use of Loomio also meant that several discussions could also happen in parallel and members could participate in the ones that interested them. The written discussions left an audit trail. There was no need for minutes because the discussion was already written down in Loomio.

One NESEP member and participant in the AGM, Cliff Southcombe, also noticed that holding the meeting in this way resulted in some shifting of power. He explained, “Normally in AGMs a few people will dominate. Someone will get up and make a lengthy speech. There will be little debate and the ideas often go unchallenged. However, using Loomio over several days meant that people had time to read the proposals carefully and give a considered response”. He believes that many people find it difficult to *think on their feet* so those who can articulate opinions quickly can dominate in face-to-face meetings. “In the Digital AGM there was greater deliberation over proposals by a greater number of people than had been the case in face-to-face meetings and some of the proposals were modified during the discussion”. Key to the success of the meeting, he believes, was the fact that the discussions were time limited and had a clear cut-off point.

This type of collaborative software promotes one strand of social enterprise theory: democratic and socialised working. However, Cliff believes that the success of the AGM was only partly due to the software. Very importantly, “the process was well managed.

Agenda items were proposed by the participants. Every proposal had to first go via the Chair.”

### Challenges

One of the issues with Loomio is that the easiest thing is to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ rather than participating in a fuller way with the debate. As Cliff points out, this can lead to voting without engaging. Another issue he draws attention to is that “people with time to spare tend to dominate, but that is often what happens face to face: those who have the time to participate will have a bigger say. I think we will learn better ways of dealing with these issues with experience”.

For Bob Stoaate, there were three main challenges:

- Ensuring the process met the requirements of NESEP’s constitution, which does not include specific provision for holding online AGMs. They had to ensure that they adhered to their own rules on things like formal notice, tabling motions, voting and so on throughout the process.
- Making sure that all users understood the process – there was some misunderstanding early on about the process which “we had to work hard to overcome” (e.g. there was an assumption that it would be a ‘live’ web conference-style event, with streamed video, etc.)
- There was a fine balance to be struck in establishing ‘ground rules’ that would encourage frank discussion but also include provision for dealing

with the well-known disinhibiting effect of text-based communication on the web.

Reflecting on what he would do differently if he were to do a digital AGM again, Bob identified three areas:

“We’d be clearer about a few of the nuts-and-bolts elements of the process – e.g. we had a complaint about the number of emails generated by Loomio’s notifications process; it had obviously not been made clear enough to users that they could disable those notifications. To help with this, we’d use more short videos to explain the process alongside the explanatory documents. Some people found the one video we produced a quick and useful way of learning how the process works.

We’d put in place a process or rule to ensure that anyone who tables a resolution is available to discuss that resolution during the discussion period: we did have one situation where the membership were compelled to vote on a resolution that had been tabled by someone who was not actually present for the discussion around that resolution.

We would work out a more effective way for members to table resolutions in advance of the actual meeting and do more work to ensure members are aware of their right to do so. This would form part of a wider plan to give more notice generally. About 5 weeks’ notice was given this time, but I think even more would help to build awareness and understanding in advance”.

### Questions for discussion and action

- What kinds of decisions does asynchronous, online discussion support? Why?
- What points would you put for and against running a meeting using collaborative software such as Loomio?
- Considering groups (formal and informal) you are a member of, how could you use the time before, during and after the online meeting to promote participation of members using collaborative software?
- Explore which other collaborative online platforms that are being used for decision-making processes and decide which would be the most useful for your group.

## 4.3 YAQUA, PERU “Quench your thirst by helping”

### Rational objectives:

- Know how to formulate a theory of change for a product and/or service for social entrepreneurs.
- Become familiar with how value is created thanks to the use of social media to publicize the enterprise and its product.
- Identify opportunities for social enterprises within the market to position their product and service.

### Experiential objectives:

- Value the ability to recognise an opportunity together with the value of creation and transformation of a product or service by social entrepreneurs.
- Evaluate the importance of socially entrepreneurial ideas to transform the approach to local development projects.

### Context

In Peru, despite advances made in basic sanitation, a significant part of the population, especially in rural areas, remains unassisted. In 2010, provision of drinking water reached 76.0% of the population - 89.0% in urban areas and 38.8% in rural areas. The level of sanitation was 66.2% - 81.9% in urban areas and 21.3% rurally.

It was in this context that YAQUA emerged, a new brand of bottled water from a social enterprise that seeks to bring drinking water to people in extreme poverty, through projects funded by the total returns made on sales.

### Content

YAQUA is a social business born out of a problem and an opportunity. The problem is that nearly 8 million Peruvians do not have access to drinking water and 13 million have no sanitation. Every year, 3,600 children die from drinking water that is not fit for human consumption. In 2013, in rural Peru, 32 out of every 100 children under the age of five suffered from chronic malnutrition and 12 in 100 had diarrhoeal diseases. The opportunity was that the market for bottled water grows by 20% every year. YAQUA is transforming the consumption of bottled water into a wave of changes to people's lives. It began operating in July 2013 and

in 2014 it started to fund drinking water projects and water filter installations.



### The beginnings of YAQUA

“It all began when I was starting an NGO, and I discovered these guys who were doing ‘Thank You Water’ which is like YAQUA in Australia. We realised this was being done in various countries, for example ‘One Water’ in the UK. I mentioned the idea over Skype to Daniel Franco, the need to do something for people who do not have access to water and the problems this leads to like diseases, malnutrition, low productivity...”, Fernando Tamayo recalls.



Fernando, 26, is a young economics graduate from the University of Melbourne, Australia.

“I decided to give up my job and everything, leave my apartment in Miraflores [in Lima] and go back to live with my parents, sell my van and buy a 1966 Beetle, to gather capital so I could do something for the 8 million Peruvians who had no access to water despite the country's economic growth.”



Daniel is a 25-year-old industrial engineer, a graduate of the University of Lima.

“Before YAQUA, I had planned to go into finance. I was working in a big company and was on my way to making a career there. But making YAQUA happen was a dream. One of the challenges I have set myself is to inspire other people to make good

on their enterprise ideas. There is no good reason not to follow your heart.”

They constituted a social business where the surpluses went towards funding water projects. “I sell the product, I do invoices, I pay taxes, and then the rest of my costs for distribution, administration, payroll etc., all the costs of a normal business and whatever is left (the profits, which usually go to partners) is for funding the projects,” Daniel says.

The national market for fizzy drinks and water is driven by Coca Cola, Pepsi, Backus and Aje. “To expect to compete with them was like a little mouse wanting to take on an elephant. It was a utopia even to have our own factory. The better option was to use the strength of the market, like in judo where you use your opponent’s strength rather than your own. The Añaños Group (part of Aje) agreed to support us with production and we could suddenly have an economy of scale. Still being small, we could compete with the big guys,” Fernando explains.

“Then we hit another problem - funding. To begin with it was anecdotal. I was having a coffee and on the next table there was a man struggling to work his computer. ‘Let me lend you mine,’ I said, and I helped him. Then he asked me, what do you do? I told him my idea (I had long hair and a beard, a total hippie). He gave me his card; his wife was social responsibility manager at Scotiabank. They called me within a week.”

To start the project they needed half a million sols (about £100k) and did not have that amount of capital. The strategy was to make alliances with three businesses: San Miguel Industrias (who bottle for the Aje Group); Scotiabank, who financed the launch promotion and publicity; and Unacem, who gave the money for the first production run. They also launched a series of campaigns to receive donations.

In the first month, they produced 120,000 bottles but only sold 5,000. The water only lasts six months and in that time they were unable to clear their stock. In the first year they couldn’t carry out a single project. The following year, they decided to change their selling and communications strategies.

YAQUA is very good quality water: “we need people to buy it because it’s good, not just to help us. If a product is bad, people buy it once, but then never again. And we need sustainability for the enterprise because the

more water we sell, the more projects we will be able to fund and that’s why we need to attract people.”

Fernando recalls: “I started to put posts on Facebook as if I was a bottle of YAQUA. Our communications had been just the same as everyone else, very pretty, very commercial, but that wasn’t us. We were more human, we needed people to know that we have put a lot of sweat and tears into this enterprise. We uploaded photos with the lorry carrying bottles, loading them, sharing the development of the project, saying we’re in this meeting, wish us luck. Noting every success, however small.”

YAQUA proposes a theory of change in three stages: the first is buying a YAQUA product; the second has to do with raising the consumer’s awareness of the problems of access to drinking water afflicting a large part of Peru; and the third relates to the actions that can change this situation. More than just a product, YAQUA is a movement. It has various slogans: “Let’s give back the water we borrowed from nature”, “Quench your thirst by helping”, “Helping is as easy as drinking water”. YAQUA does not see anybody as competition; other brands are just future partners. They believe the movement has to become strong enough for all of them to join in the same shared vision.

YAQUA has received important recognition, including:

- First place in the IV Social Enterprise Competition, 2012, University of the Pacific.
- Second place in the Prize for Innovation and Sustainability, Commercial Category, PREMIO 2014.
- Finalist in the Kunan Prize, 2014, in the Kunan Inspirers category.
- Recognised in the XI Human Rights Gathering “Can we earn responsibly?”, at the Institute of Democracy and Human Rights of the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, 2015.

### Vision

“In 2050, all Peruvians will have access to clean water and sanitation.”



## Mission

“To transform bottled water consumption into a wave of change and solidarity.”

## The role of social media in YAQUA's work

The use of social networks has been essential in the development of YAQUA. These outlets have given them a broader and broader bottled water market, which has in turn broadened the possibilities for funding projects. At the time of writing, YAQUA has 23,799 'Likes' on Facebook, and on Twitter, 187 tweets, 1,729 followers and 315 favourites. It also has a YouTube channel.

“Unlike the competition, we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of wasting millions on mass advertising. YAQUA moves on social networks. Help us spread the word to more people about how helping can be as easy as drinking water,” says Fernando.

Publicity is aimed at spreading the message that “by buying and drinking YAQUA you are giving eight days of clean water to a person living in poverty.” This is the value offered to the consumer.

They decided to aim for some publicity to go viral. The idea was to state everything positively rather than anything negative. For example, an image of a group of children drinking water from a river was dismissed because it appeals to a different emotion. They tried to find something happy, something that would make people feel happy for having helped. That is how they settled on the message “The more thirsty you are, the more you help”.

They shared videos on YouTube and launched the YAQUA Challenge, a competition among Facebook and YouTube users where people had to record a one-minute home video eating spicy food that made them need to drink water straight away. The aim of this campaign was to “launch YAQUA onto the market, showing that helping others does not have to be tedious: it is as easy as quenching your thirst. Helping can also be fun.” The

challenge was accepted by various artists. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M4B57-t8QOs>)

## Management and funding

“We have designed a hybrid structure that allows YAQUA to function as a social business. Currently, YAQUA is under the UMA VIDA S.A.C. brand, 99.8% of which belongs to the ‘*Bien por Bien*’ (‘Good for Good’) Association, created by the founders of YAQUA with the goal of guaranteeing the social objective of providing clean water to those who need it most,” Fernando and Daniel explain.

The remaining 0.2% belongs to the co-founders, who keep this symbolic amount simply to comply with the requirements of a *sociedad anónima cerrada* (similar to a limited liability company) i.e. at least two members in agreement with Peruvian legislation. Both Fernando and Daniel have signed an agreement stating that all the profits from this 0.2% will go to ‘*Bien por Bien*’.

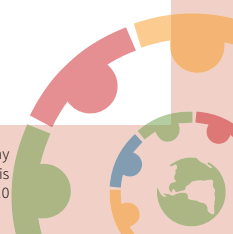
The strategy is based on the development and execution of projects through alliances with various NGOs specialising in creating and implementing water projects, as well as with the community and the local municipality. YAQUA provides the funding, and follows the project, and the NGO does the work on the ground.

The projects are carried out in rural communities that have fewer than 100 houses, with an extreme poverty index greater than 40%, outside the jurisdiction of a Sanitation Services Company and in the areas prioritised by the Ministry for Development and Inclusion for reducing chronic child malnutrition. Peru 2021, Peru's Social Responsibility Gateway, helps with auditing in order to “make sure everything we say is true,” says Daniel.

For YAQUA, it is essential that the community is involved in the decision process regarding the technology and the system to be put in place. It is not a case of merely giving the project as a present, but of making this inclusive and empowering for the population.

## Questions for discussion and proposals for action

- What strategies did the YAQUA team use to be able to compete?
- How could you overcome a lack of resources in order to carry out a social enterprise idea?
- Develop a proposal for a social enterprise where the use of social media is relevant
- What similar strategies are there in your local area?
- Develop a proposal for a social enterprise where the use of social media would be relevant.



## 4.4 RADIO SOL MANSI, GUINEA BISSAU

### Rational objectives:

- To identify the values of Radio Sol Mansi
- To analyse the role of radio in the African context
- To reflect on the impact of radio on social change

### Experiential objective:

- To be aware of the fundamental role radio plays in the wider community.

### Context

<http://www.radiosolmansi.org/>

Radio Sol Mansi (RSM) began broadcasting in Mansoa, an inland city in Guinea-Bissau, on 14th February 2001. The idea for the community radio was dreamt up by the city's priest, Father Davide Sciocco, an Italian Catholic missionary, during the civil war of 1998-99. RSM grew over time and in 2008 became the Catholic Church National Radio, with nationwide coverage. There are currently three studios, in Bissau, Mansoa and Bafatá, and two retransmitters, in Canchungo and Gabu.

The success of RSM has been recognised in a variety of ways: the appreciation of its listeners, invitations to take part in conferences nationally and internationally (in the US and Portugal), and various national and international prizes (sports journalist of the year; best national media outlet for information and awareness on HIV/AIDS; best national journalist on the subject of HIV/AIDS; the Takunda Prize, Italy, 2005, as an innovative interfaith project; and the Gabardi Prize, Switzerland/Italy, 2008, for services to peace and development.)

RSM is recognised nationally for the quality of its services and programming, and has made associations with a series of renowned organisations in Guinea-Bissau and even internationally: the United Nations (UNIOGBIS, UNICEF, UNDP), the Red Cross, the Voice of Peace Initiative, Caritas Germany, various development NGOs, the Criminal Police and the Army, among others.

News programmes are broadcast through six community radio stations, whereas programmes on peace education are broadcast on all the community radios

in the country. The weekly round-up is rebroadcast by two stations in Cape Verde and RSM reaches both southern Senegal and northern Guinea-Conakry.

The station currently broadcasts from 06.30 until 23.00, with a schedule including news (recommended for its credibility, impartiality and content), education (on health, agriculture, human rights, peace education, religion, environment and traditional culture, programmes for women and children and programmes for members of the military) and entertainment. The three studios work to a common schedule, but there is also a local schedule in Bafatá in the afternoon. A network of 50 correspondents across the whole country gives a voice to those normally excluded from communication circles.



### Content

#### Internal operation

The legal status of Radio Sol Mansi is as an Association, considered the best way "to be able to establish a greater link with different community interests, because although the station is on a national level it continues to have a community component, offering a public service" (Mussa Sani, RSM studio coordinator in Mansoa).

The station's journalists have employment contracts with RSM but the voluntary spirit is also very much present. In the first few years of RSM, when it was in Mansoa only, the station relied on more than 120 volunteers, in technical areas and programme

preparation, and as parochial correspondents. This voluntary spirit lives on. According to Ana Bela Bull, studio coordinator in Bissau and one of the interviewees for this case study: “We work because we want to, but not only for the salary ... I never thought that Radio Sol Mansi could get to this scale, national radio and so on ... It gave me the chance to begin to help my community, the one where I was born. I knew the problems that existed in the Tabancas, in the communities, and through the radio I could help, giving people information on what they could do, what was better and, once I had begun presenting a programme related to libraries, motivating people to read and to let their children go to school.” A real spirit of solidarity among colleagues strengthens relationships and helps to overcome difficulties, whether it is a case of sharing lunch, which is bought on a rota, or giving support in difficult situations, such as “taking on the funeral costs for the mother of a colleague; we gave collaborative financial help, and those who had no money at the time got a loan from the radio and we were able to help in that way” (Ana Bela).

Another aspect of RSM that attracts journalists and volunteers is its credibility in Guinean society and a commitment to training reporters and technicians, who have attended workshops given by journalists from Portugal, Brazil, Cape Verde and Italy. Some reporters and presenters also had opportunities for professional experience and courses in Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Angola, Portugal and Brazil.

Since 2008, the Mansoa studio has also operated as a Radio School, offering practical training weeks for all the community radios in Guinea-Bissau (with an average participation rate of 25 radios and more than 50 people trained per year).

### **Radio Sol Mansi “A Voice of Peace in Guinea-Bissau”**

RSM emerged from the armed conflict of 1998-99 with the aim of being a voice of peace in Guinea-Bissau and that remains its motto today. As is written on the RSM website, “if radio was used to support the war, why not start a radio to support peace, reconciliation and development?” Public backing has been huge, and this position has granted RSM much credibility among both Guineans in general and a broad range of public, private and civil society institutions. “What I think distinguishes us from other stations is our way of working, our commitment to our listeners, our com-

mitment to working for peace in Guinea-Bissau ... We continue to disincentivise violence and show that it is possible to build peace through radio with awareness-raising messages” (Ana Bela).

To carry out this role effectively, RSM journalists regularly attend training sessions on themes such as: peaceful language in the run-up to Presidential elections, journalistic independence and impartiality, human rights, international humanitarian law, gender, interfaith dialogue between the Muslim majority and Christians, and planning civic education programmes for members of the military.

Maintaining this position is not always easy, however, posing a persistent challenge in a country which has seen real political instability and constant coup attempts, both successful and failed -the most recent was on 12th April 2012 before the country returned to political legitimacy with the April 2014 elections.

Journalists decided in the most difficult period of the 2012 coup to cancel the programme dedicated to human rights as the reports made during the programme created tension with the provisional government: “people’s fundamental rights were being violated so we had to suspend the programme, bearing in mind the danger it posed at that time” (Ana Bela). In such a context, many journalists have said that Guinean law should give more support to communication professionals, as although it seems “that everything is very clear, very open for journalists, that we can do our job, and there is plenty of tolerance, in practice that is not the case.” Their view is that “the law protecting journalists ought to be stricter” (Ana Bela).



### **The power of communication**

The fundamental role of RSM, tied to its efforts in fighting for peace, is to “give a voice to those without one, to the capital’s most isolated populations, those punished most by the country’s situation” (Ana Bela). The station is thus fulfilling a unique social role, which

gives rise to new concerns about which language to use and about scheduling.

RSM chose to prioritise programmes in the true language of national unity, Guinea-Bissau creole (of Portuguese origin). Although Portuguese is the official language, in reality a large part of the population struggles to understand and speak the language, using the creole in almost every situation. Also taking on an educational capacity, however, the station presents some news segments in Portuguese, and includes in its schedule some programmes in that language, one of which is dedicated to Portuguese culture across the world. The level of language used on the station is also worthy of attention, given RSM's social function: "We try to use very basic language so that the whole population can understand what is being said - precisely what the population can do in order to have a more or less balanced life" (Ana Bela).

RSM's programme schedule includes space for education (programmes on themes that could educate the population in areas considered essential), news and entertainment. It is worth highlighting the announcements service, part of the news section, and characteristic of community radios, including RSM. The radio, in contexts where access to means of communication is difficult, serves to make family announcements or to bring together meetings or gatherings. The radio remains one of the favoured means of communicating, for example, the death of someone special, inviting relatives to the funeral and providing details (when and where to arrive, what to bring as an offering, or to eat, etc.). The same happens for weddings.

### Radio for interfaith dialogue

A characteristic of RSM from the beginning has been collaboration between ethnicities and religions. Despite the station being connected to the Catholic Church, there has always been a great deal of collaboration from Muslims as well as Christians, and notable ethnic diversity. In August 2009, RSM signed an historic collaboration agreement with the Muslim Radio Coránica de Mansoa and since then they have worked together to create programmes. Each station also has a weekly slot dedicated to the other religion: the Catholic radio broadcasts an Islamic programme and the Islamic radio a Catholic one. This interfaith aspect also extends to other Christian churches, with a weekly slot given to an Evangelical group. Armando Mussa Sani, studio coordinator in Mansoa, is convinced

he is the only Muslim in the world coordinating a Catholic broadcaster; indeed, the subject of religion is wherein lies "the great lesson Radio Sol Mansi could give to the world."

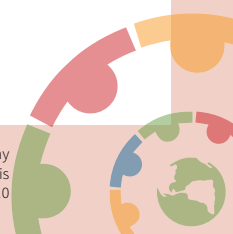
### Community development

RSM sees itself as a radio station that serves the community. Its schedule focuses on education, including programmes dedicated to various subjects considered essential to the personal and social development of society, and on a quality of information guaranteed through established associations. In the words of Mussa Sani, "we can help and advise through communication ... There is a programme where every day we interview a representative of some art form, including tailors or cobblers, making them feel valued ..."

- Health and hygiene - the station includes in its schedule a programme called *Viva Saúde* (Healthy Life) in collaboration with, for example, the Nutritional Services Department and the National Secretariat for the Fight Against AIDS.
- Education - RSM also schedules programmes encouraging families to send their children to school, such as *Skola ta kumpu terra* which tackles important themes around schooling and its value in 'building' (kumpu) the country (terra). Other programmes to highlight include those which give a first-person voice to groups that are generally invisible, such as the programme Disabled Voice.
- Gender - Questions of gender are another of RSM's main concerns, whether in terms of programming or its own practices. Listening to Ana Bela, it has clearly been a long path to achieve more equal professional practices: "When the station was still Community Radio, I was the only woman on the Board of Directors [one woman and six men] ... If I was even a little bit late, it would all start - 'we knew you wouldn't be on time because you're a woman' ... but I pushed myself to the limit, stayed until the very end with the men to try to balance that prejudice. The situation has improved now, there are 12 women at the station, we have some great female journalists and reporters." Ana Bela herself highlights the path women in general have to take in the programme *Mindjer i balur*, through which she hopes to support women in their decision, for example, to continue to study or to fight for their children to do so.

## Questions for discussion and action

- What three things struck you most in the case study? Why?
- Analyse RSM's programme schedule and comment on it with reference to its social aims.
- Explore how Radio Sol Mansi (or your local community radio) combine radio and social media to promote community development.
- Find out which community radios operate in your area. Analyse their aims and programmes. How consistent are these with the values of the social and solidarity economy?





## 5. PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES

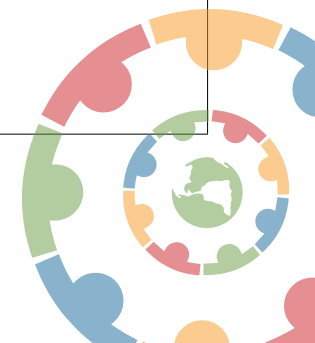
CHAPTER 5: BUILDING YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK - ANALYSING THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA	
<b>Title</b>	Building your social network - Analysing the use of social media
<b>Theme/ Focus</b>	Social networking and analysing the use of social media
<b>Group size</b>	Groups of 3 to 4
<b>Time needed</b>	Project over one semester (approx. 4 months)
<b>Purpose/ Learning objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To identify with a social/environmental issue within student's community/university.</li> <li>▪ To know how to initiate a social network with a social purpose.</li> <li>▪ To identify the appropriate social media to start the network.</li> <li>▪ To analyse the use of social media organisations.</li> </ul>
<b>Competences addressed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Put into practice the values of the social and solidarity economy in a virtual environment.</li> <li>▪ Know how to select the most appropriate social medium to meet the organisation's objectives.</li> <li>▪ Reinforce the virtual presence of the organisation.</li> </ul>
<b>Keywords</b>	Social network, social issue
<b>Materials needed</b>	A computer/portable device connected to the internet, data base.
<b>Preparation/ Instructions for educator -trainer</b>	<p>For building your social network:</p> <p><b>1st step:</b></p> <p>Choose a social enterprise working around an issue that you identify with.</p> <p><b>2nd step:</b></p> <p>Of the purposes identified for building virtual community (e.g. advocacy, fundraising, education for change, democratic participation, etc. what will you aim to do?</p> <p><b>3rd step:</b></p> <p>Review and answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which social media will be the most appropriate to achieve this purpose.</li> <li>▪ Who are some important existing networkers in this field?</li> <li>▪ How can you support and build upon what they do, and vice versa?</li> <li>▪ What content you will post online and how you will maintain this?</li> <li>▪ Why will this content be of interest to others?</li> <li>▪ How can you promote engagement of others?</li> <li>▪ How will you use online activities to support offline activities, and vice-versa?</li> <li>▪ How will you consider the impact of your social media campaign?</li> </ul> <p><b>4th step:</b></p> <p>Analyse your own use of social media around your issue of concern. Which posts/tweets, etc. attract most interest? Which ones elicit responses? Which ones promote real world actions around your social change issue?</p> <p>For analysing the use of social media:</p> <p><b>1st step:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Select a social enterprise/cooperative in your field of interest and analyse its use of social media.</li> </ul> <p><b>2nd step:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Find out to what extent and how successfully are they using social media to (choose those which apply):</li> <li>▪ Build and engage community, fundraise, advocate, educate for change, promote democratic participation, be accountable, brand the product/service, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>3rd step:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What suggestions would you make to the organisations to develop their presence and impact on social media?</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	Nonprofit tech 4 Good: <a href="http://www.nptechforgood.com/category/social-media/">http://www.nptechforgood.com/category/social-media/</a>
<b>Notes</b>	
<b>Person to contact for more information</b>	Margaret Meredith and Catalina Quiroz <a href="http://www.yorks.ac.uk/socialeconomy">www.yorks.ac.uk/socialeconomy</a>



CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY RADIO / ANALYSING THE USE OF COMMUNITY RADIO	
<b>Title</b>	Community Radio / Analysing the use of community radio
<b>Theme/ Focus</b>	Radio programme/podcast to promote a social issue of concern
<b>Group size</b>	Groups of 3 to 4
<b>Time needed</b>	Project over one semester (4 months)
<b>Purpose/ Learning objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To know how to start and plan to launch a radio programme.</li> <li>To know how to analyse the effectiveness of the radio for raising awareness about a social issue.</li> </ul>
<b>Competences addressed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put into practice the values of the social and solidarity economy through the medium of radio.</li> <li>Know how to make the most of the medium of radio to promote themes which are relevant to your community.</li> <li>Know how to educate, inform and mobilise the community around a social issue using the radio.</li> </ul>
<b>Keywords</b>	Community radio, tackle issues, mobilizing people.
<b>Materials needed</b>	A community radio station, or audio recording equipment (digital recording device and audio editing software, such as the free software Audacity and web space to publish the podcast e.g. podomatic.com)
<b>Preparation/ Instructions for educator -trainer</b>	<p>For building your social network:</p> <p><b>1st step:</b></p> <p>Choose a social issue of concern in your community.</p> <p><b>2nd step:</b></p> <p>Create a short radio programme to broadcast in your community or on the internet</p> <p><b>3rd step:</b></p> <p>Of the purposes identified in the literature review (democracy, development, peace, gender equality, or others relevant to your area of concern) what will you aim to do (e.g. debates, get opinions, suggestions for action, feedback about policy regarding the themes described before)</p> <p><b>4th step:</b></p> <p>Consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which community radio programme style will be the most appropriate for your audience?</li> <li>What other community radio programmes are deal with the same issue?</li> <li>What is being said about them and what is their outreach?</li> <li>What content you will you prioritise and how you will maintain this?</li> <li>Why will this content be of interest to others?</li> <li>How can you promote engagement of others?</li> <li>How will you consider the impact of your community radio programme?</li> </ul> <p>For analysing the use of community radio:</p> <p><b>1st step:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the programme content of a community radio station.</li> </ul> <p><b>2nd step:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the purposes of the programmes in relation to development and democracy.</li> </ul> <p><b>3rd step:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Found out about the ownership and governance of the station. What are the opportunities and challenges associated with this in terms of community-interest programming?</li> </ul> <p><b>4rd step:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What suggestions would you make to community radio owners to widen their audience and achieve their goals?</li> </ul>
<b>References</b>	<p><a href="http://www.amarc.org/">http://www.amarc.org/</a></p> <p>AMARC (1998) What is community radio? AMARC Africa and Panos Southern Africa in collaboration with IBIS/Interfund and WACC. Available <a href="http://www.amarc.org/documents/manuals/What_is_CR_english.pdf">http://www.amarc.org/documents/manuals/What_is_CR_english.pdf</a> Accessed 27th June 2015</p>
<b>Notes</b>	
<b>Person to contact for more information</b>	Margaret Meredith : <a href="http://www.yorks.ac.uk/socialeconomy">www.yorks.ac.uk/socialeconomy</a>

## 6. COMPETENCES

STAGE 1	AREA OF COMPETENCE	Competence further explanation & descriptors:  <b>ORGANISATION AND USE OF LOGICAL, INTUITIVE, CRITICAL AND CREATIVE NARRATIVE THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKS</b>	SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES
Developing communicational skills for social media	Effective practice in communication through social media	<p>Have a clear understanding of how to maximise the use of social media in building and engaging community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I am able to embed SSE values in all communication through social media.</li> <li>▪ I exercise active listening to find out what stakeholders' interests and motivations are.</li> <li>▪ I can break strategic plans down to enable others to collaborate.</li> <li>▪ I can acknowledge people's contribution in appropriate ways.</li> <li>▪ I can communicate complex issues in ways that motivate people to action.</li> </ul> <p><b>Education for change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I can place key current educational issues on mainstream virtual discussion.</li> <li>▪ I can promote critical thinking, suggesting current development issues for constructive debate.</li> <li>▪ I am able to promote positive behavioural change through the use of social media.</li> </ul> <p><b>Democratic participation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I can find innovative ways in which people can participate in on-line communities.</li> <li>▪ I encourage students to have a say in political and social issues through social media.</li> <li>▪ I can coordinate action on social or political issues: demonstrations, petitioning, environmental action</li> </ul> <p><b>Accountability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I am committed to reporting all facts that are relevant to stakeholders/students/staff.</li> <li>▪ I am open to ask for and give genuine feedback to students/staff/stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ I am open to engage stakeholders/students/staff in improving an educational product or service.</li> </ul> <p><b>Advocacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I am well informed about the human rights I advocate.</li> <li>▪ I can motivate others in advancing activism for a social, political or cultural causes.</li> <li>▪ I am aware of some obstacles (e.g. political, social) to the change I am advocating.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ethical branding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I am able to position ethically regarding the offer of a specific training service or product</li> <li>▪ I am committed to promote visibility of causes such fair trade, traidcraft, fairphone, etc.</li> <li>▪ I can develop a distinctive identity showcasing the values of my organisation through branding.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fundraising &amp; crowdfunding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I can build strong and convincing arguments for asking for funding and/or investment.</li> <li>▪ I am able to attract social investors through innovative and effective socially entrepreneurial ideas.</li> <li>▪ I am able to keep relationships with donors and supporters from a win-win perspective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I create a communication strategy using social media.</li> <li>▪ I manage a blog to promote the exchange of ideas, proposals around a specific theme to raise students' awareness before deciding on their course of action.</li> </ul> <p>I study webpages for evidence of effective practice in social media use, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <a href="http://care.org">care.org</a></li> <li>» <a href="http://conservation.org">conservation.org</a></li> <li>» <a href="http://eqca.org">eqca.org</a></li> <li>» <a href="http://malianomore.org">malianomore.org</a></li> </ul> <p>For fundraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <a href="http://healthbay.org">healthbay.org</a></li> <li>» <a href="http://nrdc.org">nrdc.org</a></li> <li>» <a href="http://pih.org">pih.org</a></li> <li>» <a href="http://savethechildren.org">savethechildren.org</a></li> </ul>



STAGE 1	AREA OF COMPETENCE	Competence further explanation & descriptors:  <b>ORGANISATION AND USE OF LOGICAL, INTUITIVE, CRITICAL AND CREATIVE NARRATIVE THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKS</b>	SELF-ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES
Developing social media literacy	Social media use	<p>The practical knowledge and understanding of the use of diverse social media:</p> <p><b>The nature of social media</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I understand social media's political efficacy and utility.</li> <li>▪ I can access websites which give practical tips for specific social media use.</li> <li>▪ I know how to select the appropriate social medium for a specific task.</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus on virtual actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I am able to launch virtual campaigns raising awareness about unfair situations calling for specific action</li> <li>▪ I promote collaborative learning in the use of diverse social media.</li> <li>▪ I am able to find, adapt and present information from a variety of sources concisely and logically in a variety of media (text, image, video), focusing on key points.</li> <li>▪ I can use language and images which promote engagement, interaction, and action in the real world.</li> </ul> <p><b>Convey ideas and facts in writing and image</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I can compose clear, direct, concise and complete messages</li> <li>▪ I can use images to reinforce messages</li> <li>▪ I am able to present information clearly, concisely, and logically, focusing on key points.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I make a list of software or apps which can support building and engaging community.</li> <li>▪ I analyse the success of the citizen movement <a href="http://avaaz.org">avaaz.org</a> and its use of social media.</li> <li>▪ I study the use of Twitter in organisations such as the following and analyse why their use is successful             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» <a href="https://twitter.com/feedingamerica">twitter.com/feedingamerica</a></li> <li>» <a href="https://twitter.com/hrs">twitter.com/hrs</a></li> <li>» <a href="https://twitter.com/fairphone">twitter.com/fairphone</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

