



Strengthening the Role of Indigenous Peoples and Their Communities in Nature Conservation:
 A Project Ensuring the Full and Effective Participation of Indigenous Peoples in the
 Implementation of the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System

LEARNING MATERIAL

Facing the Media

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Introduction

“ The media provides a providential opportunity to reach people everywhere, overcoming barriers of time, of space, and of language; of different platforms digital and otherwise, presenting the content in the most varied ways imaginable; and offering to all who search the possibility of entering into dialogue with one another and with the mystery of God. ”
 - Pope Francis

The world due to globalism and globalization and the entrance of digital media has truly become a mere neighborhood despite the barriers of language, location, culture, philosophy, belief, and ways of doing things. Communication in the era of the 20th and the 21st century has the potential to become two way or multiple ways of participation once lodged in a platform. Media: broadcast, internet-based, micro-media and mega-media can also continue to be one-way providing data, information, thoughts that can carve a certain culture, belief, perception. Media today are multi-faceted and complicated.

In this era, there are two HUGE types of communication: the DIGITAL and TRADITIONAL. The human minds more often than not cannot cope up with the speed and images of electronic media so much so that those who handle and control virtual communication can easily play games or manipulate the human mind, feeling and behavior. Especially given that images are the most powerful medium of any communication, it can be harnessed in many ways in both virtuality and reality.

Electronic media is the most powerful experiment ever inflicted on human kind and continue to evolve its power to control the minds and hearts of humanity.

	Traditional	Digital
Forms	Print, Radio, and TV	Social Media, Webpages
Audience	Locals and masses	Online public
Direction of Communication	Typically one-way, top-down	Typically two-way
Feedback Mechanism	Takes time to gather audience feedback	Instant: Audience can provide real-time feedback

Social Communication in communication parlance, covers the widest scope of communication. All communication actually deals with relationships. Social Communication is all the ways and means we as humans communicate.

Facing media in general is engaging as a participant in programs, presentations, news format of the different big institutions who massify the small bits and pieces of human reality. Today, massification on radio and television broadcasts, major newspapers, and all of social media digital platforms and a combination of all types propel a person and her/his message in a world-wide scope.

Usually, an ordinary person has to be aware of the rudiments of public speaking to be able to speak effectively before media. Likewise, mass media or massive media has a penchant for trying to put words, ideas, perspective into persons' mouth. In facing mass media to participate, a person has to consider the following:

- Be aware of the culture of media: who are they and what is their objective?
- How do they prepare before they allow a person to participate?
- Know the ways of understanding and dealing with mass media
- How to prepare yourself before you actually face mass media outlets

Culture of Mass and Online Media

All over the world, mass media is controlled by a vested few who own the technical and content resources. If the institution is owned by private investors, the main objective is popularity — number of viewers, readers, listeners, which translates into revenues. If the media is owned by the State, its main purpose is to protect and promote the interests of the State.

There are a splattering of small media channels owned and operated by unaffiliated private persons or groups — many of which are community radio and/or television. The digital platform has massive attraction, however, an input has to be liked, shared, and passed on to become popular.

There are more than **1.74 billion** websites in the world as of 19 April 2020. On the other hand, there are around **4,437,215,927** users of social media as of January 2020. If you have your website or a message in social media, it takes time to be popular. The culture of social media is popularity.

Media in the Philippines: Mandate and Purpose

Media in the Philippines is mostly privately-owned with some owned by government that serves a public function — to bring news and form public opinion. It is considered the “watchdog” and the “fiscalizer” of the government, courts, security forces, and corporations. Their role is enshrined in the Constitution guaranteeing the freedom of the press to keep the power of the government, corporations and other powerful individuals/institutions in check.

The media is often expected to uncover corruption within the government and corporations. As such, they are often critical and analytical.

They live by deadlines, chasing the run of the mill of publication or the airing of their program/s. They compete among themselves to get the best and freshest “scoop” of stories. Some, on the other hand, are so-called “envelope journalists” who take money to publish stories in favor of their “benefactors.”

Characteristics of Broadcast and Print Media

- Scoop, exclusive
- What bleeds sells
- Deadlines
- Corporate editorial policies
- Entertainment clicks
- Making money is the best policy

How to deal with Broadcast and Print Media Persons

Befriend them, they too have psycho-emotional needs. They have to come up with news, articles features, sound-bytes. Be sure you are a friend lest they manipulate your statement by cutting the sentences or words according to their format.

They are not all experts and need your expertise. Explore that. But do not brag. Just show them who knows better. You have to prepare your stuff.

Give favors so that you have an investment for the rainy day. A favor is when you provide clear information that they need so much. Media is competition for who gives the information or news first.

Always tell the truth but be wise in skirting around hurting or destructive information detrimental to yourself, and your organization or people. Telling the truth is presenting basic events or information: no frills, no editorializing. Do not give media openings to further question you on your answer for destabilizing follow-up questions.

Writing and submitting an article to newspaper

It is always important to keep your story interesting and meaningful. A complete story always provides answers to the *5 Ws and 1 H*: *Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How*. **Often, too much emphasis is provided on Who, What, Where and When and too little emphasis on Why, How, “What Now,” and “What do I Care?”**

It is crucial that sources are cited for all information provided in an article. This takes a lot of effort, but this is essential. For a complete story, it is important that various sources are cited such as: (1) the directly affected; (2) officials; (3) experts; and, (4) broader community.

A writer always aspires to use the best words and imagery to convey a story. The following are minimum elements of a good story:

- True: in both facts/data and context that they are presented
- Fair: showing the perspective of all if not, most of those concerned actively avoiding biased reporting

Elements of a good story

- Good Content
- True
- Fair
- Sourced from verifiable sources
- Evidence-based
- Cites relevant laws and policies
- Fits the audience: do they expect to be entertained? To learn? To be convinced?
- Good Writing
- Clear and concise
- Simple yet compelling
- Organized, has coherence
- Offers visual representation: pictures, graphs, diagrams
- Considerate of those who will be affected in the statements
- Safe from libel

Before starting to write, the writer must have the following already in mind:

- Your target audience/s
- Your message/s to them
- The point you want to make
- What evidence do you have
- The takeaway you want to leave to your reader
- What format is best to convey the above to your target audience:
 - ⇒ Letter- A request for information or action to a person or institution.
 - ⇒ Press release/Statement- a manifestation that aims to clarify or articulate the stance of a person/group/institution on a particular issue.
 - ⇒ Report- A rundown of facts weaved into a narrative.
 - ⇒ Position paper- An articulation that intends to forward an agenda and pursues a call to action.

When writing, it is best to organize your thoughts. Here are some steps to organize your thoughts:

- Draw the links among the information you wish to present
- Structure the thoughts into an outline
- Fill in the gaps in logic and data until your outline presents a solid and coherent story

Upon writing, the following are the parts of an article:

- *Introduction*: develop a “hook”— or an opening line that would catch the attention of your reader
- *Body*: bring your point across clearly and convincingly — and provide evidence and data to support your story
- *Conclusion*: Summarize your points in a brief sentence. Leave a lasting impression, and if appropriate, get your audience to think further.

Your first draft is rarely your final. The key to an effective article, is editing! It is a good practice to have somebody read your work to seek inputs and to offer new perspective. Keep on revising and improving your work until you are convinced of your article.

Uploading an article to social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc)

Using online technology has become indispensable to daily life as information and communications technology has spread.

Especially in the Philippines, we are recognized as the social media capital of the world with the most users of Facebook per 1,000 population compared to any other country. We are also recognized part of the top 5 users of Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, and other social media platforms.

What makes social media “social” is the fact that it is cheaper to access than mass media and provides platforms for instantaneous, real-time interaction and participation. It is well-organized and provides for multi-media communication among its users. It makes the world feel much smaller because any social media user can communicate with anyone even people with great power and popularity such as politicians and celebrities. Anybody, with enough diligence and creativity, can become an online sensation with little investment in money and other resources.

In general, the mechanics of creating a good story in social media is the same as that in newspapers and other mass media except that in social media — the shorter, the better. Because of the amount, speed, and variety of information available online, the attention span of social media users tend to be shorter and easily distracted. It is therefore important that you convey your message in the shortest and most interesting way possible, lest you lose the interest of your target audience.

A powerful tool that one can use in social media is a hashtag (#). Hashtags act as a tracker for a certain issue or event (#BagyoPH, #COVID-19, #WalangPasok). The use and promotion of hashtags can be powerful way to connect your social media post to a broader movement.

Providing opportunity for participation with fellow social media users is an avenue unique to social media. Given this, expect that you will receive feedback on your post almost immediately, which can either validate or invalidate your message.

Given this, it is important that a social media user avoid:

- sharing confidential information online as this may result to undue risk to stakeholders to such confidential information; and,
- disseminating and sharing wrong and unvalidated information online as this might spread easily, widely.

One must remember always that the internet always stores the information you share online. This therefore requires social media users to be selective of the information they share online.

Finally, social media has a tendency to expose its users to content that confirms their own opinions and hide perspectives that contradict one’s thoughts. This is part of the design of social media that tracks your behavior online and caters the information you are exposed to align with your past behavior, to meet your appetite. As such, it is crucial to always examine your consumption of your social media as this might affect your perception of the world, your community, and yourself. Always be aware that social media is just a version of the world — virtual reality — and therefore, it is always the social media user’s responsibility to do research and verify the information they get from the internet; and, to seek out perspectives that are different from your own. □

This learning material was prepared by Fr. Francis Lucas for the project “Recognizing the Indigenous Communities behind the Conservation of Nature: A Project Pursuing the Full and Effective Participation of Indigenous Communities in the Implementation of the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System” jointly implemented by ANGOC, Bukluran, and PAFID, this initiative is supported through the Sudden Opportunity Grant Facility of VOICE, an initiative by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs executed in a consortium between OXFAM Novib, and Hivos.

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The Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) a regional association of national and regional networks of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Asia actively engaged in promoting food sovereignty, land rights and agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, participatory governance, and rural development. ANGOC member networks and partners work in 10 Asian countries together with some 3,000 CSOs and community-based organizations (CBOs). ANGOC actively engages in joint field programs and policy discussions with national governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and international financial institutions (IFIs).

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The formation of Bukluran Para sa Pangangalaga ng Kalikasan ng Pilipinas (BUKLURAN, Inc.) or the Philippine Indigenous Peoples Community Conserved Territories and Areas Consortium (Philippine ICCA Consortium) is a nationwide network of community membership-based indigenous people’s organizations (IPOs) of all ethnographic types. It is premised on bringing together indigenous peoples who assert and utilize traditional governance to protect community-conserved areas. Common to its members is the shared view that indigenous peoples’ survival depends on the protection of valuable knowledge systems and the ancestral lands on which we thrive and persist. Our community-conserved areas can become the ultimate driving force in the conservation of biodiversity when our rights to our land and resources are respected and recognized.

Our main purpose is to carry out and realize the full recognition and respect for the rights, governance and self-management of our ancestral lands.

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Philippine Association for Intercultural Development, Inc. (PAFID) is a social development organization which has been assisting Philippine indigenous communities to secure or recover traditional lands and waters since 1967. It forms institutional partnerships with indigenous communities to secure legal ownership over ancestral domains and to shape government policy over indigenous peoples’ issues. PAFID works exclusively with the indigenous peoples’ sector, specifically upon written or signed requests for assistance from indigenous communities or their representatives. PAFID envisions indigenous communities as responsible stewards of their resources.

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