Media and Narrative: Managing Conflict in Polarised Societies

The rise of digital platforms and social media has transformed the media sector and affected which narratives are widely circulated and how. Focusing primarily on news-related content, this discussion paper outlines the role of different types of media in promoting simplified narratives that drive conflict in deeply divided societies. In addition to measures for promoting accurate and unbiased content that counters disinformation, it proposes practical approaches for ensuring that the media amplifies diverse and complex stories to nurture a richer narrative landscape, which encourages engagement – especially across groups – in polarised contexts.

Building on IFIT's narrative framework, this paper offers guidance to a range of stakeholders – civil society, policy makers and donors, among others – on understanding narrative dynamics and working with narrative in the media to help manage conflict at the national level. It is based on extensive IFIT research and in-depth consultations with diverse experts in narrative theory, journalism, communications, internet governance and conflict, including members of IFIT's Inclusive Narratives Practice Group.

Context

The first part of this paper offers context on: the role of narrative in driving or mitigating conflict; the impact of a transformed media on narrative landscapes; and the role of media in promoting social divisions. The analysis summarises well-known evolutions in the media landscape, but through the lens of narrative.

The Role of Narrative in Driving or Mitigating Conflict

Narratives are the stories that groups tell about their own and others' origins, identities and beliefs. On the *individual* level, a narrative constitutes the life story and experiences that help a person derive meaning from daily living. On the *collective* level, narratives

relate to the interpretation of historical events and joint experiences, using particular language to form group belief systems and a symbolically constructed shared identity. These narratives shape behaviour, offering a storyline with clear roles to make it easier to act with purpose. We are all influenced by our society's narrative landscape and understand ourselves and others through it.

In countries marked by deep divisions, narratives can encourage social engagement and political action to address grievances and manage intergroup conflict. They can also, however, increase polarisation by inflaming grievances and weakening social trust, to the point of motivating violence. Various stakeholders – particularly political and social elites and institutions – use narratives to pursue their own objectives, and often have incentives to spread divisive narratives that secure their influence. A divisive narrative highlights the validity of one group's grievances and the moral superiority of its claims, while placing blame for conflict on 'others'. It shrinks diverse and complex group narratives into a simple, self-reinforcing story that side-lines inconvenient facts and evidence. A highly polarised society tends to be dominated by two or three simple and opposing narratives, in which extreme views eclipse moderate views in public debates and other narratives are hidden from view.

When simple narratives dominate a society's narrative landscape, individuals and groups in conflict compete with one another for attention and support. They often fail to participate in the same reality, with opinion driving observation and their facts conforming to the story they prefer to tell rather than the other way around. For example, if one side only sees a world in which 'dangerous enemies' threaten the lives of innocent civilians, they reject a rival narrative in which the other side is fighting poverty or state violence (Table 1). In such contexts, debates are more emotional than rational, stories do not complement as much as marginalise each other, and the apparent gaps between narratives can lead to a breakdown in civil conversation and political processes, well in excess of the actual variations in privately held opinions of the great majority of the population.

For this reason, a key approach to managing conflict in deeply divided societies is 1) to expose how narratives drive the conflict, 2) to understand the multiplicity and complexity of the stories behind simplified narratives, and 3) to amplify the many less dominant group narratives that are circulating in society. The aim is not to impose or select a unifying narrative to disseminate, or even to promote neutrality, but rather to disrupt unconscious preconceptions, enable self-reflection on narrative bias, and encourage a greater diversity of narratives to thrive together. As the narrative landscape is enriched, simple and divisive narratives lose power. Groups and individuals are able to perceive the relationships and commonalities among their stories, acknowledge others' grievances, and engage with each other to handle conflict in a more constructive way. The media is central to this process.

TABLE 1. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SIMPLIFIED AND COMPLEX NARRATIVES

Feature	Simplified Narrative	Complex Narrative
Their Motivation	Power and Domination	Rational Interests
Their Powers	Exaggerated	Ordinary
Their Character	Evil	Human
Our Past	Innocent	Complicit
Our Future	Romantic	Realistic
Our Focus	To Damage Them	To Benefit/Limit Harm to Us
Causal Factors	Reduced to Few or One	Multiple and Complicated
Causal Direction	Linear	Feedback Loops
Causal Context	Individuated	Structural
Discourse	Polarising	Elaborating
Representation of Time	Compressed	Complicated
Relations with Adversary	Treasonous	Productive
Scope of Conflict	Cosmic	Mundane
Language of Stories	Poetic	Prosaic

Adapted from Solon Simmons, *Root Narrative Theory and Conflict Resolution: Power, Justice and Values* (London: Routledge, 2020).

The Impact of a Transformed Media on Narrative Landscapes

The media has long played a role in shaping societies' narrative landscapes. For much of the 20th century, traditional media outlets – newspapers, radio and later television – promoted certain group narratives and interests, most commonly of states and political and business elites. As it professionalised in the second half of the century, the news media continued to have political leanings and prioritise particular angles or takes on stories, yet it also increasingly prized objectivity and unbiased reporting on a broader range of stories relevant to the public interest. Print and broadcast outlets built norms around fact-checking stories, verifying their sources and providing differing viewpoints. They filtered the type and quality of news and indicated minimum standards for how social and political actors should behave.

The 21st century has seen a major shift in the media landscape. Traditional media outlets have increasingly switched from analogue to digital platforms, expanding their reach, especially in countries with significant information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and widespread access to low-cost internet and devices. The number of media outlets, digital content platforms and types of content producers has grown exponentially. Social media – from platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Telegram and TikTok to the content producers who use them – has created a world where anyone can be a media outlet. The line between news and entertainment has blurred. Since they share content, so has the line between traditional and social media. In fact, for many, social media is their primary source of news.

Although they continue to play a filtering role in operating around a central news room, traditional media outlets are under unprecedented stress. They are experiencing more online and in-person bullying and threats, pressure from corporate management and tension between maintaining objectivity and meeting financial targets. Many traditional outlets, particularly independent and small newspapers with a local readership, have closed or declined in importance. In countries with limited ICT infrastructure or which are subject to state interference – particularly those with authoritarian traits – traditional private media outlets may maintain their influence, but often with curtailed freedoms or overshadowing by state-controlled media. Yet internal and external actors, including diasporas, regularly challenge the status quo through social media platforms or by smuggling content across borders. As such, traditional media is facing a growing crisis of popularity and legitimacy in a range of different contexts, which is eroding its capacity to shape national narrative landscapes.

The changes in the media sector have given a much larger number of diverse content producers a voice and the potential to access a broad audience. Content producers are identifying and disseminating stories that previously would not have been heard at scale. They are creating larger (virtual) public spaces for marginalised actors, including women and young people, and providing openings for individuals and groups to engage digitally and mobilise for social and political action. They are sharing stories using more diverse and potentially inclusive formats, such as videos, podcasts and infographics. The result is an increase of content produced outside major outlets and in the global South, enabling learning about events and practices across countries and continents that serves to boost the periphery. Many more narratives are in public circulation than ever before.

At the same time, competition among content producers and the commercial opportunities presented by new platforms have deepened the drive to grow a following, attract advertisers and monetise content. As a result, both traditional and social media content have become far more targeted to their intended audience. In turn, the audience – often represented by its most vocal members, not the general public – increasingly directs which facts and events are covered and how. As sensational, simplistic and emotional messaging attracts attention and drives profits, content producers have an incentive to circulate stories that provoke outrage and other strong emotional responses among their followers.

Big tech companies such as Google, Twitter and Facebook – but increasingly also traditional media with a large online presence – use algorithms that further tailor content to specific audiences. Despite evidence that major companies like Facebook are aware that targeted content contributes to outrage and polarisation, their business model disincentivises them from curbing provocative content, while the regulatory environment largely insulates them from accountability. These developments have narrowed the type and accuracy of content many people access, and thus the array of narratives they see in circulation. They have also opened new avenues for the spread of simplified narratives that encourage polarisation.

The Role of the Media in Promoting Polarisation

Traditional and social media shape narratives by focusing attention on particular events and issues, to the exclusion of others. They use storytelling techniques to amplify stories on these topics, making them emotionally engaging to draw in their audience, often by emphasising the suffering experienced by an individual or a group and by constructing binaries of heroes and villains. They then repeat and elaborate those particular stories, placing them in different contexts and looking at them through various lenses, to the point that the combined stories advance a narrative so stable and normalised that it seems to be a given. Narratives promoted by the media become highly visible in the national narrative landscape and internalised by the population.

In some cases, media outlets and content producers deliberately disseminate stories with an interpretation of events in line with a specific narrative. They may be motivated by power or profit, pressure from influential actors and institutions, or membership of a social group and belief in the validity of its grievances and moral superiority of its claims. In other cases, content is determined by unconscious bias, where content producers unwittingly tell stories that bolster a narrative which has shaped their worldview. Even skilled journalists, who are trained in objective reporting, reveal partiality by what they choose to cover, who they frame as a hero or a villain, or the language they use to describe a person or event. Because it is so common, narrative bias can be difficult to detect.

The rise of digital platforms and media targeting has enabled governments, political and business elites, and other influential actors to engage with their supporters and promote their agendas at an unprecedented level, including through propaganda and polarisation. To build their personal and institutional influence, some use simplified narratives on digital media to recruit followers; organise virtual campaigns to 'other', discredit or bully their rivals; and instigate real-life events with the aim of provoking collective violence and destabilisation, usually in a way that conceals their role as orchestrators. Social media surveillance and spyware enable them to target both supporters and opponents at scale. Many influential actors use traditional and social media to spread misinformation, disinformation and 'fake news', creating a sense of confusion in the public about what counts as 'real news' and which information is factual and credible.

With the transformation of the media, it is commonly observed that people are increasingly exposed to a barrage of stories on various platforms throughout the day, while being sucked into 'echo chambers' that reinforce their worldview and block alternative perspectives. These often involve amplifying manipulated or redacted accounts of reality while spreading provocative messaging that attracts attention and engineers outrage, at times to the point of encouraging hate speech. Once in an echo chamber, these false or simplified narratives can become so effective that, when exposed to opposing views, people become more rather than less entrenched in their polarising viewpoints. Individuals and groups then spread these narratives to their social networks via online platforms and messaging services like WhatsApp. Digital technology also makes platforms and content that render a particular narrative easier to find than ever before.

As part of this dynamic, the media provides engaging content that can be moulded to support a group's origin and development story – in some contexts, facilitating the spread of stories that marginalise parts of society. In such cases, the media contributes to a process of moral subjugation whereby the 'other' is no longer perceived as a legitimate moral actor. The amplification and cross-fertilisation of diverse storylines does not take place, individuals do not understand the meaning of competing narratives, and subsequently the prospects for dialogue or any sort of constructive engagement grow slim. Becoming aware of narrative bias and the value of complex narratives is key to acknowledging and countering these divisive effects of the media.

Options

Against the context described above, this section proposes five avenues for nurturing a rich narrative landscape via the media: training and education; collaboration and dialogue; verification; funding; and regulation. Intended to prompt new thinking, it presents a wide range of options for various stakeholders to consider advocating or implementing depending on type of government and sociopolitical dynamics, degree of polarisation, level of ICT infrastructure, and amount of press freedom and liberty of expression, among other factors. The endnotes point to concrete examples of these options.

The premise is that when a society has a varied media that disseminates accurate content and amplifies many diverse and complex stories, this produces a rich narrative landscape that encourages engagement among different social groups and institutions, making it more likely that conflict will be managed in a constructive manner. Groups with particular narratives and identities can coexist in tension, and individuals can identify with multiple narratives explaining their origins, identity and behaviour. The effect is to highlight common roots and interwoven elements across different group narratives, enabling mutual understanding and dialogue driven more by facts than by antagonistic myths.

Training and Education

Through training and education, the general public – in addition to influential public and private sector actors and traditional and social media content producers – can learn how narrative biases shape our worldviews; identify simplified narratives and disinformation; and locate and disseminate stories that demonstrate social complexity. Specific training and education actions could include to:

- Initiate and amplify information campaigns for the general public on what narratives are, how they are mobilised by different actors, and the role of monetisation and new media business models in shaping the content people see and share. These campaigns could also cover how to identify fake news, disinformation and misinformation, including through the use of online tools and apps that track manipulation of information.[1]

- Offer narrative competency training to diverse stakeholders in the public and private sectors, as well as to members of the public,[2] including components on why and how different actors use the media to promote polarisation and disinformation, as well as on how unconscious bias affects the way we consume media content.[3]

- Expand media and information literacy programmes in schools, libraries and youth hubs.[4]

- Establish and publicise a website and virtual forum that provides resources on what narrative is and how it operates, promotes a media code of ethics and conduct, and encourages objectivity and viewpoint diversity in traditional and social media via diverse practical tools, ranging from visually stimulating 'how to' guides to video games.[5]

- Re-introduce apprenticeships at traditional media outlets so that diverse content producers learn about codes of conduct and the habits and norms of the profession through practice, while gaining deeper knowledge regarding their focus areas.[6]

- Promote learning opportunities for different types of content producers via tertiary education programmes and capacity building trainings, as well as small grants programmes and fellowships that promote objective content.[7]

- Train content producers working in conflict settings, emphasising the importance of truth seeking over promoting a particular agenda, while also highlighting the need for conflict-sensitive content that does not exacerbate divisions. The same applies to content producers in diasporas for countries where the media is constrained and/or the diaspora is a driver of conflict.[8]

Collaboration and Dialogue

Through collaboration and dialogue, media outlets and content producers – in cooperation with influential actors as well as individuals and groups in conflict – can evaluate their biases, roles and practices from a narrative perspective; develop and spread more complex narratives; and inspire new thinking among their constituencies. Specific collaboration and dialogue actions could include to:

- Organise a series of public dialogues and debates – at community, subnational or national levels – on narrative bias and the role of the media in promoting polarisation, with participation and storytelling by individuals and communities affected by polarisation.[9]

- Create a national or regional professional association to help diverse content producers exchange experiences and knowledge, understand their audience, and better conceive their roles as information mediators amid media's polarising influence, as well as how conscious and unconscious bias shapes their stories.[10]

- Establish networks of small and independent media outlets to collaborate on and share content that addresses localised conflict, as well as amplifying the content at the national level, particularly with regard to underreported issues.[11]

- Build networks of media outlets and content producers representing different sides of a conflict to collaborate on verifying content and countering disinformation and misinformation, as well as addressing threats to content producers.[12] Fellowships could place content producers in media outlets that subscribe to different narratives than their own, or enable an exchange of fellows between large and small outlets (including between the global South and North), to promote awareness of bias, mutual understanding and engagement across dividing lines.

- Promote collaboration between content producers and active members of marginalised communities across dividing lines to build understanding of grievances that spur conflict, co-create content and share resources and expertise to reveal threats to the public interest.[13]

- Establish depolarisation councils – or incorporate their ideas into existing associations – to encourage self-reflection among and across key cultural organisations (eg, movie studios, television production companies, museums and theatres) so as to nurture the heterodoxic middle at the expense of the polarising edges.

- Organise dialogues and workshops between diverse stakeholders and representatives of big tech companies, particularly in their public policy departments and at the regional level, to co-develop approaches for self-regulation and maintaining ethical standards.

- Convene media 'influencers' in civic, political and institutional leadership positions to discuss their narrative biases and promote complex over simplified narratives among their constituents.

- Consider using and building open-source, decentralised social networks that are run and overseen by individuals or collectives, rather than big tech companies, and allow for collaboration and cross-platform engagement.[14]

Verification

Improved and standardised verification processes help stakeholders ensure that media content is accurate, fair and inclusive. Specific verification actions could include to:

- Adopt, elaborate and raise awareness of accepted indicators for accurate, fair and inclusive content and procedures for verifying content based on these indicators.[15]

- Establish and raise awareness of whistle-blowing platforms and other online tools that help the public track and publicise manipulation of information.[16]

- Create partnerships among media outlets/platforms and state, business and community-based actors, including civil society organisations and academics, to verify media content and debunk disinformation,[17] including through an international, multi-stakeholder charter on disinformation.[18]

- Maintain pressure on social media platforms to limit automated posting, adopt and maintain transparent verification procedures for accounts of public interest, and implement systems of standards enforcement and warnings for audiences.[19]

- Create an independent national observatory with a group of respected stakeholders to elevate the political cost of financing and promoting content that encourages hate speech, disinformation and polarisation.

Funding

Funding for initiatives ranging from ICT infrastructure to collaborative platforms to research is crucial for the initiatives proposed above to succeed. Specific funding actions could include to:

- Promote investment in ICT infrastructure and access to low-cost internet and devices in order to address global and local digital divides.

- Support public information and educational initiatives focused on narrative competency and media and information literacy.

- Establish, and compile information on, national endowments to sponsor independent and small media outlets as well as fellowships for content producers, with a focus on best quality work and the principles of investigative journalism.[20]

- Invest in pan-regional media in the global South to ensure greater autonomy and security to investigate and report.

- Invest in small and independent news outlets that focus on reporting local stories across conflict divides in a fair and accurate manner, with direct knowledge of the political and other dynamics that shape the local context.

- Support platforms and networks for fact-checking and verification.

- Invest in research on disinformation and its effects as well as experimentation on how to engage different sides in reducing polarisation through the media.[21]

- Invest in a more equitable public technology infrastructure for the web.[22]
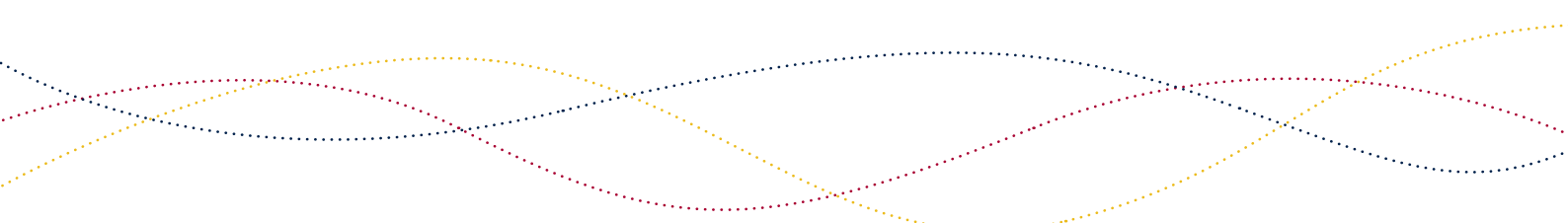
Regulation

Media regulation is an important tool, although approaches that encourage rather than dampen storytelling are preferable. Among traditional private outlets, broadcast media has tended to be subject to statutory regulation or co-regulation by outlets and the state, whereas print media has relied on self-regulation, largely through press councils. Social media platforms also rely on self-regulation mechanisms, although content moderation and removal policies have no clear standard, lack transparency and tend to be reactive rather than proactive, as well as prone to abuse and uneven implementation. The media regulation methods proposed here attempt to address some of these shortcomings, and are intended to supplement the other approaches, particularly education and collaboration, which can also be implemented within a shorter time period and may be more feasible in repressive or conflict contexts. Specific legislative and financial regulatory actions could include to:

- Re-assess the legislative framework and government regulations on media outlets and platforms – including a regulatory agency with diverse representation – to address how to reduce their capacity to polarise while preserving press freedom and liberty of expression. Include provisions for limiting ownership of media organisations by political actors, ensuring proportionate political coverage of parties, amplifying minority political and cultural interests, addressing bullying of content producers, and criminalising the dissemination of false information.[23]

- Offer special tax benefits for independent media outlets and publicly fund news organisations with a public service mandate, and greatly expand the national and local non-profit news sector. Ensure that any publicly subsidised outlet includes rules for proportionate political and minority coverage, in addition to other measures that help reduce polarisation. This includes disincentivising staff to drive up traffic via provocative and polarising content.[24]

- Subsidise local news production or establish local news utilities, ensuring in each case that competition and a fair spectrum of views are maintained.

- Use anti-monopoly powers to reduce the dominance of big tech companies. Push them to apply technological solutions to addressing problematic content (eg, algorithms against hate speech, transparency plug-ins). Consider requiring them to pay for news content featured on their platforms, keeping in mind that this might limit access to information in some countries.[25]

- Establish social media councils made up of a range of stakeholders (including academics and civil society) to encourage self-regulation, maintain ethical standards, address content moderation problems and increase transparency and accountability.[26]

- Implement a national action plan to prevent and address bullying and violence against content producers.[27]

- Where violent conflicts or repressive governments make country-based regulation difficult, consider establishing or strengthening regional bodies as a substitute.[28]

- Incorporate media mapping into conventional conflict analysis as standard practice, assessing the influence of different types of outlets and platforms; their ownership, market concentration, capacity and degree of viewpoint diversity; and the influence of global and regional versus local sources of information.[29]

- Incorporate regulatory reform of media into peace agreements and include media as a focus in any transitional justice processes.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the role of the media in promoting simplified narratives that drive polarisation and conflict in deeply divided societies. It has proposed methods for nurturing richer narrative landscapes across the media sector via training and education; collaboration and dialogue; verification; funding; and regulation. Instead of imposing one or two unifying narratives, the paper advocates the value of amplifying and elaborating numerous narratives already in circulation, in order to demonstrate social complexity, encourage engagement and improve conflict management.

Endnotes

1. Eg, https://osome.iu.edu/tools/botslayer; https://trusted-news.com; https://hoaxy.osome.iu.edu

2. Eg, https://www.partnersglobal.org/newsroom/narrative-competency-the-power-of-intentional-communication

3. Eg, https://insidepolarisation.nl/en

4. Eg, https://mediasmarts.ca

5. Eg, https://heterodoxacademy.org; https://mediainitiatives.am/en

6. Eg, https://www.bbc.com/careers/trainee-schemes-and-apprenticeships/apprenticeships/dja

7. Eg, https://mediahelpingmedia.org/2017/07/25/from-citizen-reporting-to-citizen-journalism

8. Eg, http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/conflict-sensitive-reporting-state-of-the-art-a-course-for-journalists-and-journalism-educators

9. For examples, see, https://www.comminit.com

10. Eg, https://sanef.org.za/about-us

11. Eg, https://periodistasdeapie.org.mx; https://ligacontraelsilencio.com; https://www.elclip.org

12. Eg, https://credibilitycoalition.org

13. Eg, https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/explainers/about-the-project

14. See, https://sopa.tulane.edu/blog/decentralized-social-networks; https://www.wsj.com/articles/frank-mccourt-wants-to-build-a-new-model-for-social-media-11633710479

15. Eg, https://thetrustproject.org

16. Eg, https://english.atlatszo.hu/about-us-fundraising

17. Eg, https://firstdraftnews.org, especially https://start.me/p/vjv8ob/first-draft-basic-toolkit. In addition, Taiwan has adopted a public-private partnership model to deal with disinformation. While diverse stakeholders work with social media companies to debunk and downrank viral conspiracy theories, the main focus is the messaging service Line (used by 90% of the population). The Line Fact Checker strategy encourages users to refer suspect stories to fact-checking bots like Cofacts, where the posts are added to a database and verified by volunteers. Working in tandem, the independent Taiwan FactCheck Center curates an online repository of disproven conspiracy theories and conducts peer-reviewed fact checking. In addition, the partnership hones public media literacy through projects such as the state-sponsored vTaiwan, which uses software to visualise consensus clusters among citizens and allows lawmakers and stakeholders to design policies that respond to the evolving middle ground while avoiding the extreme views at either end. The government also sends literacy trucks to rural areas to educate people on how to spot fake news. This approach combines top-down interventions (with government introducing new technologies to increase transparency and combat disinformation) with bottom-up engagement (with thousands of citizens enlisted to address disinformation, including most recently during COVID-19 when pharmacists played this role).

18. Eg, https://cbc.radio-canada.ca/en/media-centre/trusted-news-charter-fight-disinformation

19. Eg, https://help.twitter.com/en/managing-your-account/about-twitter-verified-accounts

20. Eg, https://www.nfnz.cz/en

21. Eg, https://www.cima.ned.org

22. Eg, https://www.projectliberty.io

23. For examples, see, https://www.loc.gov/law/help/social-media-disinformation/compsum.php. Germany has adopted the Network Enforcement Act (NetzDG) to counteract hate speech, fake news and illicit content by threatening social networks with a fine of up to 50 million EUR if they do not remove "clearly illegal" material within 24 hours of a complaint (or a week if it is not clear if the content is illegal). This model depends on self-regulation, but is within the parameters of the state's regulatory framework (like broadcast media). However, the NetzDG matrix has been replicated by authoritarian states to provide a cloak of legitimacy for digital censorship and repression and most have explicitly referred to the NetzDG as justification for restricting online speech.

24. See, https://www.publicmediaalliance.org/changing-times-for-public-media-funding

25. Eg, Australia has adopted codes of conduct that oblige social media platforms to pay news organisations for news snippets. They mandate advance notice of changes to algorithmic ranking and presentation of news, appropriate recognition of original news content, and provision of information on the use of personal data collected during interactions with news content. The aim is to reduce social media's ability to contribute to polarisation (by impacting its bottom line) and increase funding for traditional media, especially smaller, regional and rural content producers (by bolstering their ability to compete).

26. See, https://www.cigionline.org/articles/social-media-councils

27. Eg, http://rm.coe.int/090000168097fa83

28. See, eg, https://www.cima.ned.org/publication/the-untapped-potential-of-regional-cooperation-for-media-reform-in-southern-africa

29. Eg, https://www.dw.com/en/tool-2-conflict-mapping/a-57051871

Acknowledgements

Founded in 2012, the **Institute for Integrated Transitions** (IFIT) is an independent, international, non-governmental organisation offering comprehensive analysis and technical advice to national actors involved in negotiations and transitions in fragile and conflict-affected societies. IFIT has supported negotiations and transitions in countries including Afghanistan, Colombia, El Salvador, Gambia, Libya, Nigeria, Syria, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tunisia, Ukraine, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.