

**Test your knowledge of the topics we will cover. Please fill out this pre-assessment before beginning the module.**

## **Communications and Media**



Welcome back to the Women Deliver Young Leaders Program Digital University! In this fourth module, you get practical tools for using communications strategically to advance your advocacy. It also focuses on developing a better understanding of how to work with the media to promote your cause, and how to creatively disseminate your key messages in multiple spaces and on different media platforms.

**Let's get started!**

# Table of Contents

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- Learning Objectives

## **USING COMMUNICATIONS TO ADVANCE YOUR ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN**

- Understanding the Media Landscape
- What Is a Communications Strategy?
- Developing Your Key Messages
- The Importance of Storytelling
- Take a Break

## **COMMUNICATION TACTICS**

- Introduction to Communication Tactics
- Presenting Messages to an Audience
- Engaging the Media
- Creating Your Social Media Strategy
- Social Media Tactics

## **CONCLUSION**

- Conclusion

## Learning Objectives

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**The rallying cry of “Ni Una Menos,” calling for the end to femicide and violence against women in Argentina, galvanized a call for urgent action at all levels, from government policymakers to individual changemakers.**

*-Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women*

[Read the full story](#) about how the hashtag #NiUnaMenos began a movement in Argentina.

**As an advocate, it is essential to know your target audience and understand the actors who can propel your advocacy goals to success.**

Introducing your work and experiences to these audiences is a key component of your advocacy. Elevating key issues in public discourse is essential to effective advocacy for young people’s access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and advancing gender equality.

Strategic communications for advocacy, the use of media and messaging to help promote your cause, can increase your impact. Effective communication with target audiences, stakeholders, and (potential) supporters generates social and political will and resources for youth SRHR. Engaging journalists can also be impactful, as can strong social media presence.

**By the end of this module, you will be able to:**

- 1** Identify the three components of a key message and apply that framework to your own advocacy campaign.
- 2** Describe the importance of storytelling in advocacy work and understand the components of a compelling story.
- 3** Define and compare fundamental approaches to engaging media, digital influencers, and integrating social media in your communications plan.
- 4** Create your communications strategy for your advocacy campaign.



**Because this module cannot cover all possible types of communications, it focuses on those most widely used and appropriate for advocacy.**

**In each country and region, the media landscape varies. It is important to tailor this information to your own country's context.**



**This module will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete. But remember, you are not required to complete it in one sitting.**

# Understanding the Media Landscape

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**Today's communications and information environment is very different from what it was even just a few years ago, and it is still changing rapidly.**

## **MEDIA LANDSCAPE**

The media landscape continues to evolve. Media today is everywhere and boundaries have virtually disappeared. Information is instantaneous, and reporting is no longer limited to reporters. Young people across the world have become a source of information, mobilization, and activism. Digital media has played an essential role in social movements and advocacy campaigns worldwide.

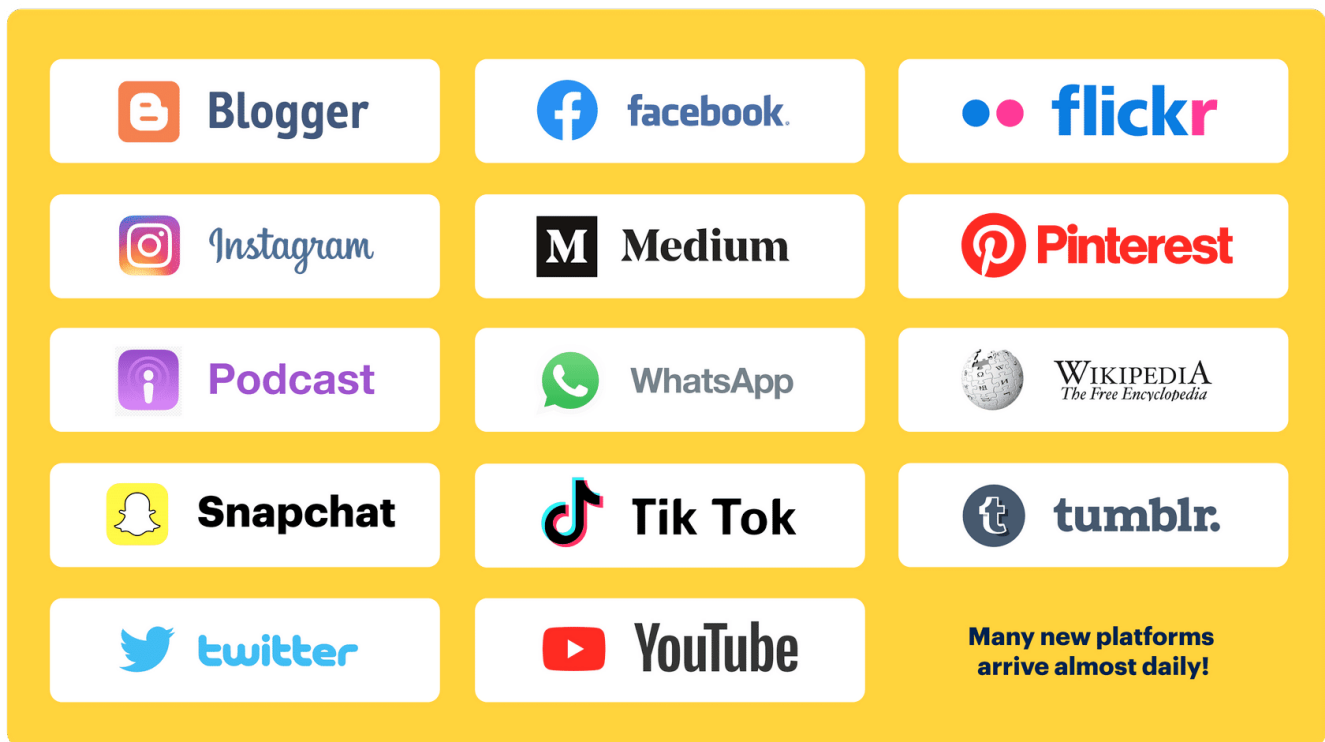
From [leveraging the power of social media to help reach a constitutional declaration in Sudan \(#SudanUprising\)](#) to the [detention and subsequent release of the #FeministFive in China](#), traditional and digital media have tremendous power that you can leverage for your advocacy.



The rapid expansion of the internet and mobile technology has changed the landscape of media and advocacy in countries around the world. Billions of people worldwide now have access to the internet.

While the number of internet users continues to grow, especially with the rapid increase in mobile technology that allows people to go online using their smartphone, a global “digital divide” still exists, leaving many people without online access. This divide disproportionately impacts women, rural communities, people of low socio-economic status, and other marginalized populations. Depending on your target audience, you may need to creatively bridge this digital divide by mixing your use of traditional and new media platforms. Traditional media includes newspapers, broadcast TV, radio, journals, and magazines. New media platforms comprise a variety of types and brands. The chart below outlines several varieties.

## EXAMPLES OF NEW MEDIA/PLATFORMS



**The next sections in this module will help you develop your communications strategy. In creating this strategy, think carefully about the audiences you are targeting and what types of media they have access to on a regular basis.**

## What Is a Communications Strategy?

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**Your communications strategy is an essential part of your broader advocacy strategy. It provides a guide for how you will use communications and media outreach to meet your project's overall goal and objectives.**

**For policy advocacy, you typically use communications to influence decision-makers, shape policy dialogue and public debate, and raise awareness and deepen understanding of your issue. Media outreach can be used to identify supporters and expand your coalition and allies. It can also address concerns and help diffuse the opposition and their criticisms.**

Your organization may have a communications strategy to raise its own profile. Leaders of a social movement may have a communications strategy to promote broad principles and ideas. While both are important, they are different from what you need to do for a specific policy advocacy campaign.

A communications strategy has many of the same components of an advocacy action plan. Like your advocacy plan, it is a document to plan, organize, and coordinate your work with others.

**The key steps to create a communications strategy include**  
**[\(UN Women, 2012\):](#)**

**01**  
**STEP**

Set the communication goal and objectives

**02**  
**STEP**

Develop key messages that effectively speak to target audiences

**03**  
**STEP**

Identify effective communication channels and tactics

**04**  
**STEP**

Map accessible communication resources—media production skills, free air time, and pro bono work

**05**  
**STEP**

Set and monitor timelines, milestones, and indicators

**Like your advocacy strategy, your communications strategy may have multiple objectives. To create your strategy, think about your primary and secondary target audiences:**

**Read each checkmark before proceeding.**

- What messages will reach your audience?
- What are the best ways to reach them?
- How do they get their news?
- How do their constituents get their news?
- Who do they rely on for information?
- What digital platforms do they use?



## For Your Consideration

## Be prepared to Act

**The media landscape changes dramatically. It is important to be flexible and prepared to make changes in your communications strategy when necessary.**

**For instance, if a news story is published that relates to your issue, it may be important to put out a press release, call reporters, or find other ways to draw media attention to your work and how it connects. Or, if the opposition launches a media campaign against your effort, you may need to change your strategy to address the campaign or correct misinformation.**

When creating your communication strategy, be mindful of the timing of your campaign or initiative. Are there certain national or global events with which you should coordinate timing to capitalize on media attention, such as World AIDS Day or World Contraception Day? Use the already existing buzz to draw attention to your advocacy campaign.

### **Communication tactics you can use:**

- Press conferences
- Press releases
- Interviews with journalists
- Public events
- Public marches, rallies, or vigils
- Other creative ways to draw media attention—public art display, flash mobs, banners, etc.
- Public protests or stunts
- Social media outreach and campaigns
- Op-eds
- Letters to the editor
- Petitions and letter writing campaigns
- Any many, many more!



## KNOWLEDGE CHECK

**It is best practice to create a communications strategy as you implement an advocacy campaign.**

---

True

False



**Correct**

It is important you take time to strategically plan your communications before you begin to execute on them. This will make your overall campaign and its messaging stronger and more effective in the long run.



**Incorrect**

It is important you take time to strategically plan your communications before you begin to execute on them. This will make your overall campaign and its messaging stronger and more effective in the long run.

**It is important to stay flexible and expect the unexpected.**

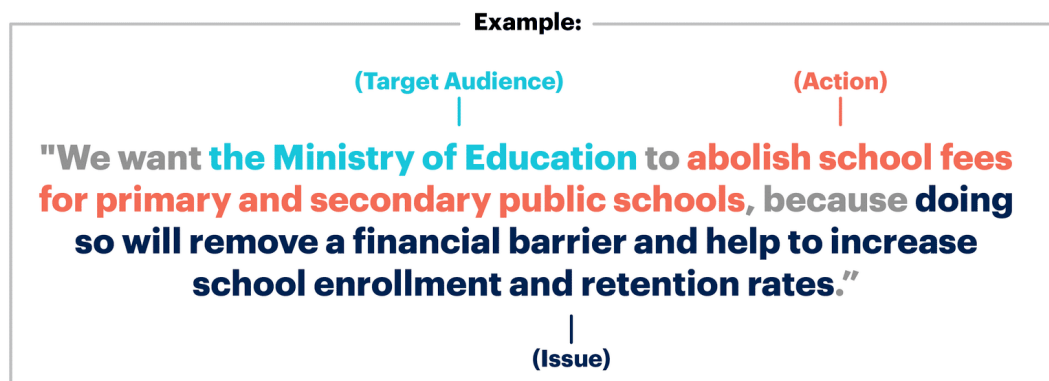
# Developing Your Key Messages

**Key messages are the main points that you and your target audience will need to remember and act upon. Key messages should be specific, clear, and include a call to action.**

## KEY MESSAGING FORMAT

As you learned in the last module, Advocacy and Meaningful Youth Engagement, **key messages** are concise and compelling statements that communicate your issue succinctly.

The general format of a key message is:



Key messages should be used consistently across all of your activities and communications. Developing a message framework can help you create key messages tailored to specific audiences.

A good message framework consists of a primary message that speaks in specific terms about the overall goal of your advocacy work. This is your core message and should be consistent regardless of your audience.

**Secondary messages** support your primary message, providing further facts and explaining how your vision can be achieved. The secondary messages should be tailored to your different audiences.

## CLASSIC ADVOCACY MESSAGE FRAMEWORK

In a classic advocacy message framework, key messages start with the issue (also known as the problem or situation), then discuss the solution, and end with a call to action—a way for the audience to get involved and help achieve the solution.

While this is a common framework and can be impactful, do not hesitate to use your creativity. Different situations will call for different methods. Knowing the classic structure can allow you to adapt it to your needs!

### Steps of the Classic Advocacy Message Framework:

**01**

#### **Problem/ Situation**

Describe the problem/situation with context and supporting facts that are relevant, generalizable, and from a quality source.



### CLASSIC ADVOCACY MESSAGE FRAMEWORK



**02**

#### **Solutions**

Use supporting facts and illustrative stories to present your recommended course of action.

**03**

#### **Call to Action**

Include tangible next steps for your audience to act on.



## EXAMPLE:

# Women Deliver Key Messages on Family Planning

Women Deliver used key messages in its infographic, [Invest in Modern Contraception and Safe Abortion](#).

Using the above classic advocacy messaging framework **read below** to find out how these messages helped frame the issue into executable action.

## ISSUE

[Citations can be found here.](#)

**214 MILLION WOMEN** in developing countries **want to avoid pregnancy, but are not using modern contraception.**

Each year this contributes to:

**67 MILLION** unintended pregnancies

**23 MILLION** unplanned births

**36 MILLION** induced abortions

**25 MILLION UNSAFE ABORTIONS** take place worldwide each year, contributing to

**6.9 MILLION** women seeking **treatment for complications from unsafe abortions** in developing countries

**8%-11%** of all **maternal deaths.**

## SOLUTION

**INCREASING CONTRACEPTIVE USE** can **boost ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY & LIFETIME EARNINGS** generating returns **exceeding 10% of GDP by 2050.**



Girls' and womens' **bodily autonomy and reproductive choices** are linked to increased **education, productivity, and lifetime earnings.**

**INVESTING USD \$8.60 per person each year\*** would meet the need for modern contraception, abortion, and maternal and newborn care in developing countries.

This would reduce:

**Unintended pregnancies** by **75%** ↓

**Induced abortions** by **74%** ↓

**Maternal deaths** by **73%** ↓

**Newborn deaths** by **80%** ↓



Women have **fewer and less severe health complications** when abortion is safe and legal.

*\*This figure is powerful because it looks like a manageable amount.*

## CALL TO ACTION

### Sexual and reproductive health and rights, and women's right

to decide on their own bodies, are the bedrock of gender equality and prosperous societies. To guarantee girls' and women's rights—and to realize the associated health, social, and economic benefits—governments, policymakers, the private sector, and civil society must:



**01**  
STEP

Prioritize and invest in sexual and reproductive health services



**02**  
STEP

Remove legal barriers that restrict women's rights and opportunities to make decisions about their own bodies and fertility



**03**  
STEP

Change harmful gender norms and tackle stigma that limit girls' and women's health and rights



**04**  
STEP

Uphold girls' and women's sexual and reproductive health and rights in all contexts and settings

## PLANNING YOUR KEY MESSAGES & WORKING TOGETHER

When working with a group—members of your organization, a coalition, or supporters of your movement—developing a message framework together can build a shared understanding of the issue, solution, and why it matters.

Creating key messages together can help unify a group and strengthen the impact of the advocacy effort. **In effective groups or coalitions, all the group members typically use the same or similar key messages.**

While secondary messages may reflect your collaborators' particular viewpoints, priorities, or specific target audiences, you want your group to be unified around a common goal and call to action.

When you are creating your key messages, integrate the classic advocacy message framework to connect more deeply with your primary and secondary target audiences. Refer back to Module 3 if you need a refresher on what target audiences are.

**Your key messages can help you create a bridge to their heart, head, and hands. Read each flipcard to learn more.**



**Heart**



Why should they care? Link to something they value. Communicate the need and what needs to change.



**Head**



What is the sound thing to do? Use evidence and proven best practices.



**Hands**



What can they do? Communicate what specific actions you are asking of your target audience.



## KNOWLEDGE CHECK

**Read more to discover which statement matches each component of the key message framework.**



Globally, only 34% of young people can demonstrate correct knowledge about HIV prevention.



ISSUE



Government invest in Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) addressing HIV/STI prevention at the Summit for AIDS. Have your voice heard!



SOLUTION



Raise awareness among government officials at the Summit for AIDS. Have your voice heard!



CALL TO ACTION



**Correct**

Using the classic advocacy message framework, the issue will include the problem and supporting facts. The solution should include your proposed answer to tackling the issue. Finally, for the call to action, including tangible next steps is key.



**Incorrect**

Using the classic advocacy message framework, the issue will include the problem and supporting facts. The solution should include your proposed answer to tackling the issue. Finally, for the call to action, including tangible next steps is key.





**Take a moment**

**Think about your own call to action. Based on your issue,  
what do you need your target audiences to DO?**

**Workshop your call to action with your fellow Young Leaders in the  
Module 4 Forum.**

**We are all here to learn from one another!**

**After you have shared your advocacy goal in the forum,  
continue to the next section.**

# The Importance of Storytelling

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**As storytellers and public leaders of your advocacy campaign, use your power to elevate the voices of those most affected and those driving change.**

## THE POWER OF STORIES

Memorable storytelling helps people connect to an issue and want to get involved to help. Telling a compelling story of how an issue affects someone personally, and how people are driving change, can often have a larger impact on a listener than just reciting facts. Additionally, too often girls and women are only portrayed as victims or passive recipients of aid. Make sure your storytelling also portrays them as the strong changemakers they are.

**Remember: Heart, Head, and Hands. A captivating and emotionally-driven story.**

### **Storytelling has the power to:**

- Make your campaign more memorable when speaking to policymakers and decision-makers than statements or facts alone.
- Increase the likelihood that a journalist will be interested and want to report on your work.
- Ensure that your secondary target audiences (those who can play a key role influencing the primary target audience or decision-makers) have the context they need to help spread awareness on your issue.



## CONSIDER THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE MESSAGES:

### Message 1

Lack of integration is a big problem in international development efforts, programs, and initiatives. Young women in sub-Saharan Africa are contracting HIV at alarming rates. Communities working on HIV and SRHR must support integration to reverse this trend and support positive health outcomes.

### Message 2

Ruth Nahurira, a young mother of three from Uganda, says men in her community are expected to be treated “like kings.” As such, it can be difficult and even dangerous to negotiate condom usage, even though she has concerns about contracting HIV, and is interested in controlling the timing and spacing of her children. In this context, woman-centered prevention options, which she learned about at an integrated clinic, have been life-changing for her.

Ruth went on to leverage the power of her experience to advocate for more investment in integrated clinics, including at the [AIDS 2018 Conference](#).

**We can all agree that hearing Ruth’s real-life need for SRHR integration makes the issue more tangible and the need undeniable.**

**Your key messages can help you create a bridge to their heart, head, and hands. Read each flipcard to learn more.**



## **Authenticity**



- Avoid the pressure to conform.
- Real, personal details make the story stick.



## **Clarity**



- Determine what message you want to convey ahead of time and relate stories to central messages.
- Drive home core messages in stories by repeating them.
- Focus on one particular message or goal at a time.



## **Truthfulness**



- Never change a story to fit a narrative.
- The truth is more compelling than a stereotype.

# WHO TELLS THE STORY?

Stories are most powerful when people tell their own. The most powerful stories in a policy advocacy campaign are told by the people who have lived experiences or witnessed issues or problems in their community and used their vantage point to create change. Sometimes, it is your own story. Often, the most powerful thing we can do as advocates is create platforms for those most affected to share their stories, with support to link their experience to a policy ask.



As we discussed in **Module 3: Advocacy and Meaningful Youth Engagement**, the people who are directly affected by an issue should be leaders and partners from the very beginning in your advocacy effort. Never bring them in just to share stories once you have already established a communications plan. This will ensure the campaign has powerful stories to tell, and framing that accurately conveys people's lived experiences.

Stories are very personal things and there are unique factors when telling SRHR stories in particular, especially if local laws and customs do not support the practices being discussed.

To be ethical, be sure you do not tell someone else's story without their consent. If your own story involves someone else, think carefully about how you talk about it, especially publicly. When collecting someone else's story, first explain to them exactly how it will be used and who will see or hear it. Secure their verbal consent to share it, and never use it in any manner other than what they agreed to. When collecting the stories of children or certain marginalized communities such as migrants, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and vulnerable ethnic or religious minorities, use pseudonyms and obscure their face and voice. Never collect or share stories involving children without the explicit, preferably written, consent of their guardian.

## Communications Case Study: #KeepWanjikuSafe

SOURCE: [Center for Reproductive Rights](#)

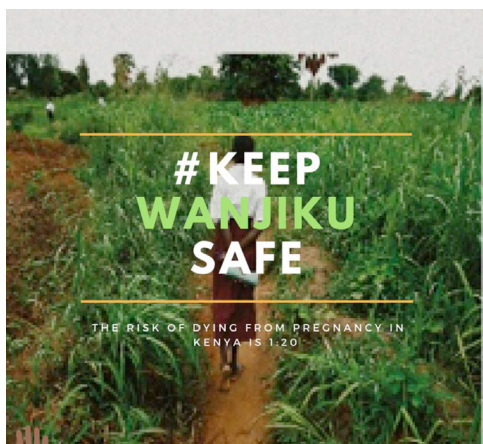
### STEP 01



**Video:** "Unsafe abortions in Kenya: a 15-year-old girl shares her story." Courtesy Center for Reproductive Rights. [Watch full video.](#)

In Kenya, abortion is legal under certain circumstances, but women are largely unable to access it due to stigma and mixed messages from the government. This issue came to the forefront when a 15-year-old girl's story made national headlines. After being coerced into her first sexual relationship by an older man, she discovered she was pregnant. She sought an abortion from an unqualified "doctor," which led to serious health complications and a long and difficult recovery.

### STEP 02



**Photo:** Flyer created for the #KeepWanjikuSafe campaign

Following this tragedy, the Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health ([T.I.C.A.H. Kenya](#)) worked with other organizations including the [Center for Reproductive Rights](#) and [FEMNET](#) to launch a campaign including a video and hashtag #KeepWanjikuSafe.

Wanjiku is symbolic of an ordinary person: Any woman, every woman. In a country where one in three girls under 18 experience sexual violence and over 40% of pregnancies are unintentional, Wanjiku represents the stories of many, and the hashtag took off.

## Tell Kenya's Director of Medical Services to Take a Stand Against Unsafe Abortion



750



Created by  
T I C A H.  
Kenya



To be delivered to:  
Director of  
Medical Services  
in the Ministry of  
Health and the  
President of Kenya

### SIGN THIS PETITION

“ We urge you to reinstate the abortion guidelines that gave Kenyan women access to a safe abortion. Withdrawing these two years ago has left thousands of women suffering terribly -- this is a health emergency that needs action now.

Enter your email address

Email

SIGN ▶

**Photo:** Screenshot of the petition to Kenya's Director of Medical Services courtesy T.I.C.A.H. Kenya

The campaign was used to raise awareness about the prevalence of the issue in Kenya, as well as to drive citizens to sign a petition urging Kenya's Director of Medical Services, Nicholas Muraguri, to take the necessary steps to increase access.

When the petition reached 50,000, coalition members promised to take to the airwaves of Kenya and demand that the government act. For further information on #KeepWanjikuSafe, [read the full story.](#)





## KNOWLEDGE CHECK

### Which of the following should you do when collecting stories for your advocacy campaign?

- Explain to your interviewee exactly how her story will be used and who you intend to see or hear it.
- For safety, use pseudonyms and obscure the faces and voices of marginalized communities.
- Carefully consider how and why you will use the story in your campaign.
- All of the above



**Correct**

That is right. All of these are necessary practices to stay ethical in your communications development.



**Incorrect**

While this is one practice, all of these should be applied in order to stay ethical in your communications development.



**True or False: It is okay to share someone else's story without their consent as long as it justifiably moves your advocacy campaign forward.**

True

False



**Correct**

**That is right.** It is never acceptable to tell someone else's story without their consent.



**Incorrect**

It is never acceptable to tell someone else's story without their consent.

**If you would like to learn more about how best to leverage storytelling in your advocacy campaign, watch the Women Deliver webinar: "Storytelling with Gender Lens for Humanitarian Advocacy."**

**Do not have time to view it now? Bookmark it for later!**

## Take a Break

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### HALFWAY THROUGH!

So far, you have learned about the media landscape that you can leverage, practiced identifying the components of a key message, and now understand the critical need for telling the stories of those affected and the change-makers within your campaign.

We recommend taking a break before heading into the next section, **Communication Tactics**. This lets your brain process and absorb new information.

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**Feel free to come back later today, or even tomorrow, to complete the course when you are rejuvenated. You are doing great!**

# Introduction to Communication Tactics

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## Giving You the Tools to Create Your Communications Strategy

In this section, you learn how to present your messages in front of an audience by establishing strong presentation skills and crafting your perfect elevator pitch. You will also gain clarity on how to engage the media in your campaign, such as writing op-eds and submitting letters to the editor. Finally, you will learn how to create your social media strategy and how to optimize the many platform options.

**All of these skills combined add up to the creation of your comprehensive communications strategy.**

## COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TOOLKITS

The next sections introduce downloadable **Communication Strategy Toolkits**. The purpose of these toolkits is to give you a resource that you can keep with you to continually build and strengthen your advocacy campaign's communications.

You can also find these in the [Course Library](#) for even quicker access outside of this module.



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**Photo Credit:** Justyna Mielnikiewicz & Women Deliver.

*In a city in Georgia, young people gather for a "One Year Out" event hosted by Gvantsa Khizanishvili (Women Deliver Young Leader Alumni, Class of 2010) to celebrate the one year countdown to the Women Deliver 2019 Conference.*

**Ready to create your communications strategy?**

**Let us get to it!**

# Presenting Messages to an Audience

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**Effective presentations can help convince an audience to agree with your proposed policy change. They can even inspire people to get more involved and help support your campaign.**

## **THE POWER OF PERSUASION**

Whether at a press conference, policy briefing, or panel, as an advocate you will have to deliver a presentation at some point. You never know when an opportunity to share your message to your target audience will arise.

**The ability to be persuasive with your arguments and effectively deliver your key messages rests in large part on your presentation skills.**

## Presentation Skills Toolkit

There are many ways to improve your public speaking skills and your own power of persuasion. The **Presentation Skills Toolkit**, which you can download below or directly from the [course library](#), offers our top four strategies you can use to deliver an unforgettable presentation. It will even show you how a fellow Young Leader put these practices into place while delivering a keynote speech at the UN General Assembly #YouthNow event.

Refer back to the Toolkit whenever you are preparing for a presentation, be it formal or informal. Get prepared to change the hearts and minds of your audience!

### PRESENTATION SKILLS TOOLKIT ↗

#### WATCH

For a shining example of these presentation skills in action, watch Vivian Onano, Youth Adviser at UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group and Women Deliver Young Leader, deliver the keynote speech at the UN General Assembly #YouthNow event.

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch video.



Toolkit\_Presentation Skills.pdf 250.5 KB



## THE ELEVATOR PITCH

Imagine you only have 60 seconds to discuss your issue and explain your mission—basically, the time it takes to ride an elevator a few floors.



### Can you tell your story quickly and effectively?

Important decision-makers, like government officials, may have strict time constraints, so it is important to explain yourself clearly and concisely. In fact, with everyone trying to manage more information than ever before, your messages are more likely to get through if they are **brief and clear**.



### Perfecting Your Pitch

When trying to communicate your advocacy messages to decision-makers and other target audiences, here are a few important things to keep in mind:

- Make your point in 60 seconds or less
- Be direct
- Speak with confidence
- Use simple and straightforward language
- Choose your words carefully
- Stay focused on your key messages
- Give them concrete next steps
- Practice, practice, practice

# ELEVATOR PITCH IN ACTION

## ELEVATOR PITCH IN ACTION

For this assignment, it is your turn to develop your pitch and put it into practice!

### Directions:

- 1** **Take five minutes** to write out all the words that you would use to describe your work/ organizations.
- 2** **In the next minute**, cross out at least five words that you think are less important to include in a short one-minute elevator pitch (acknowledging they might be important words, but perhaps not the first you would use).
- 3** **In the next minute**, circle just three remaining words you would absolutely NEED to describe your work because they are inextricably linked to your mission.
- 4** **Finally**, using the words remaining (including the circled words), fill in the following elevator pitch structure:  
Hello, I am from [ORGANIZATION], which is focused on... (10 seconds)  
Our mission is to... (20 seconds)  
We do this by ... (20 seconds)  
Our goal is to... (10 seconds)  
We are looking for support in [call to action]... (10 seconds)  
Record a video of you reciting your elevator pitch and post in the [Module 4 Forum](#)

**It may feel uncomfortable at first, but with practice, it will become much easier.**

**After you have posted your video in the Forum,  
continue to the next section.**



# Engaging the Media

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**Many media tactics can be undertaken using both traditional and new media sources.**

**To gain media attention for your issue, some potential tactics include writing op-eds and letters to the editor, issuing press releases and media advisories, and engaging with journalists. All of these tactics can gain media exposure for your issue and can be used to put public pressure on your target audience.**

## **OP-EDS**

An **op-ed** is an opinion piece that convincingly makes the case for an issue. It is submitted by someone not on the newspaper's staff.

Newspapers publish op-eds solely at the discretion of the editors. It is important to make your op-ed stand out. Op-ed pieces can also be written for media websites and personal blogs. Once your op-ed is published, be sure to publicize it widely through all of your channels to raise awareness.

## Writing an OP-ED Toolkit

It can feel daunting to sit down to write your first op-ed. We have been there! That is why we have created the **Op-ED Toolkit** to better assist you. The Toolkit includes:

- Tips on where to begin with your op-ed strategy
- Advice on what kind of content to include
- What makes for an effective op-ed structure
- How to submit an op-ed

Want to see how the Senior Manager for Humanitarian Advocacy at Women Deliver brought to light the immediate necessity for sexual and reproductive health services for girls and women in emergency situations? We have included her op-ed in the Toolkit as an example of a compelling narrative.

### OP-ED TOOLKIT ↗

#### OP-ED STRATEGY

1

##### SET THE GOAL FOR THE OP-ED

What are you trying to achieve? For example, you might want to raise public awareness about the lack of healthcare workers in your country.

2

##### DEFINE THE AUDIENCE

Are you trying to reach your neighbors, local policymakers, national leadership, or someone else?

3

##### IDENTIFY THE APPROPRIATE OUTLET

Which local or national paper is most likely to reach your desired audience? Or is there a digital outlet that would be best?

4

##### DETERMINE THE BEST TIME FOR PLACEMENT

Is there an upcoming hearing, board meeting, or legislative vote that will highlight your issue? Is a report being released to which you want to draw attention? On the other hand, is breaking news occurring that will limit attention to your issue?

5

##### IDENTIFY AN ORIGINAL ANGLE

How can you draw attention to the issue or bring a new perspective? Your thoughts need to be original, creative, fresh, and timely. For example, a strong angle could be a personal story on how the lack of healthcare workers has impacted your ability to deliver care.

6

##### HIGHLIGHT RELATED AND KEY DATA

Stories and opinions are great, but op-eds see more success if they are also accompanied by accurate and compelling data.



Toolkit\_OpEd.pdf 1.3 MB



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Another way to gain media attention for your issue is to write a **letter to the editor** in response to an article or opinion piece that someone else wrote in a newspaper or magazine.

Letters to the editor are significantly shorter than a full op-ed and can be easier to write. They can still get your issue exposure and can provide an excellent way to respond to an article that is written by an opposition group, highlights an opposing viewpoint, or includes misinformation.

## Letters to the Editor Toolkit

The **Letters to the Editor Toolkit**, which can be downloaded below, is another resource to aid you in fostering engaging interactions with the media. The toolkit offers tips on how to create a powerful letter to the editor. It also highlights an example of a letter written by Cecile Richards, Former President of Planned Parenthood, in response to an article about the need for comprehensive sexual education, highlighting the letter's core strengths and structure.

Always be on the lookout for relevant articles tied to your issue and its opposers in publications that are viewed by your primary and secondary target audiences. When you are ready to respond, refer back to the **Letters to the Editor Toolkit** for help!

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR TOOLKIT**

**SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**OPENING IDENTIFIES THIS AS A LETTER TO THE EDITOR** To the Editor:

**LTE IS RELEVANT AND TIES TO A RECENT ARTICLE** "Sex Ed in Washington," by Ross Douthat (column, Feb. 1), misses several key points.

**COMPELLING EVIDENCE** First, comprehensive sex education does work. A recent study by the University of Washington found that teenagers who were taught comprehensive sex education were half as likely to become pregnant as those who received no sex education or were taught abstinence-only.

Second, sex education is not a question of ideology. Republican and Democratic governors have rejected Title V abstinence-only financing for their states because abstinence-only programs simply don't work.

Third, Congressional studies have found not only that abstinence-only programs are ineffective, but also that they teach misleading and inaccurate information.

President Obama is right to invest in medically accurate, age-appropriate sex education programs, and to insist on rigorous evaluation of these programs. Our teenagers deserve nothing less than to be healthy and safe.

That's why local Planned Parenthood health centers throughout the country are a trusted resource for parents, teenagers and their communities for teaching comprehensive sex education, which emphasizes abstinence as the best way to avoid pregnancy and infection, along with information about contraception, healthy communication, responsible decision-making and prevention of sexually transmitted infections.

**AUTHOR IDENTIFIED** Cecile Richards  
President, Planned Parenthood  
Federation of America  
New York, Feb. 2, 2010

Source: "Sex Ed in Washington," New York Times Opinion, 01/31/10.



Toolkit\_Letters\_to\_the\_Editor.pdf 178.5 KB



# PRESS RELEASES AND MEDIA ADVISORIES

Press releases and media advisories are an easy way to share information with the press about a newsworthy event related to your campaign.

## What is the difference between a press release and a media advisory?

A **media advisory** alerts members of the press that an event is happening in the future.

A **press release** provides the highlights of an event or announcement and is frequently given to reporters attending the event, or sent out as the event is occurring or immediately following, or used in lieu of an in-person event.

With either option, you will need to anticipate and respond on-the-record to relevant events with a powerful quote and position in hope of media attention.

## Press Releases and Media Advisories Toolkit

Press releases and media advisories will be an important element of your communications strategy. To make sure you have the knowledge needed to create them, download the **Press Release and Media Advisories Toolkit** below.

The Toolkit includes key details and guidelines on structuring press releases or media advisories, as well as a sample press release that you can use as an example—and about our very own Young Leaders Program, no less!

## PRESS RELEASES AND MEDIA ADVISORIES TOOLKIT ↗

### PRESS RELEASE/MEDIA ADVISORY STRUCTURE

#### HEADLINE

Remember that reporters are looking for a story that will be interesting to their readers and pleasing to their editor. They want to know only the information that will help them craft a good story. State your most exciting news, finding, or announcement in as few words as possible.

#### SUBHEAD

Subheads are remarkably useful tools, but are often overlooked by press release writers. Basically, the press release subhead gives you the opportunity to flesh out your angle and further hook the reporter, without stepping on the drama of the press release heading.

#### LEAD (FIRST PARAGRAPH)

The first paragraph includes the who, what, when, where, and how of the story. If the reporter were only to read the first paragraph of a good press release, they would have everything they needed to get started.

#### THE REST OF THE PRESS RELEASE/MEDIA ADVISORY

The remainder of the press release serves to back up whatever claims were made in the lead and headline. Add quotes and use enough supporting material to make your case.

#### THE END OF THE PRESS RELEASE/MEDIA ADVISORY

Putting three hash signs (###) at the end of your press release denotes that your content is finished.

#### THE BOILERPLATE

"Boilerplate" is an old newspaper term meaning a block of standard text that's used over and over again. It is common to add a sentence or two after the triple hash signs describing your company or organization and what you do.

**TIP: Anticipate and respond on-the-record to relevant events with a powerful quote and position in hope of media attention.**



Toolkit\_pressrelease.pdf 914.5 KB



# ENGAGING WITH JOURNALISTS, BLOGGERS, AND INFLUENCERS

Engaging with journalists, bloggers, and social media influencers can bring significant attention to your cause. Your job as an advocate is to make the journalist's work as easy as possible and provide them with an easy story to write. You want your issue to come across clearly and positively.

Build relationships with the media prior to needing them. There may be papers or journalists interested in your issues. Do your research and identify them. Create a list of contacts, reporters, and other media representatives, and keep it up to date. Invest in building relationships with reporters who are interested in your cause. Meet them face-to-face, when possible. There are also efforts to be made to train journalists in understanding SRHR, gender, and development issues. Building a group of reporters' expertise in these areas can improve coverage on a wide range of related issues.



**Pro-tip:** Although contexts can vary, as a rule, you should refrain from sending friend requests to journalists on Facebook. Always strive to maintain professionalism. Instead, consider following the public Facebook page of journalists or following them on Twitter or LinkedIn.

## For Your Consideration

## Answering Tough Questions

When being interviewed by a journalist, remember that, unless otherwise agreed to ahead of time, everything you say is “on the record,” meaning you can be quoted. Be careful with your words and transform difficult questions into opportunities for delivering positive and simple messages. Revisit the section on opposition in **Module 2**, Step 8. Much of the advice there pertains to answering tough questions.

## THE ABC APPROACH

When asked a difficult question, try to follow the ABC approach to bridging your key message. **Read each flipcard to learn more.**



ANSWER the premise of the question(s).



B

Bridge

BRIDGE to the important issues For example:

- “The real issue here is...”
- “What is important to remember is...”
- “That speaks to a bigger point...”



C

Communicate

COMMUNICATE your key messages.

## ABC IN PRACTICE

**Question from a Journalist:** Abortion is a contentious issue that causes more conflict than consensus. Why continue to push for access when it seems easier to reach the SDGs if you let this issue go?

**ANSWER:** We believe we should not be playing politics with the health of women and girls.

**BRIDGE:** Playing politics will not save lives, but we know access to safe abortion does.

**COMMUNICATE:** Too often, women seek unsafe abortions to end unwanted pregnancies. If we plan to meet the SDGs, we have to address every cause of pregnancy and childbirth-related cause of death. This means ensuring the protection of human rights and access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive healthcare, including skilled care during pregnancy and childbirth and access to safe abortion.



**Pro-tip:** Make sure you check The Download, Mighty Networks, and the email you provided Women Deliver frequently for media opportunities and other updates. If you have a primary email account you check more frequently, consider setting email forwarding so you do not miss out on these timely opportunities.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Check out our 10 Steps to Media Success webinar for more information about engaging media makers [here](#).





## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Now that you have a better understanding of the types of ways to engage with media in order to be most effective, here are the **Dos** and **Do nots** of media engagement.



**Do**



**Do not**

Include a call to action for your audience.

Stick to your messages and stay focused.

Assume everything is quotable unless otherwise agreed upon.

Use simple, non-technical language as much as possible.

Rehearse for interviews and presentations.

Use short, clear examples and facts to explain your perspective.

Respond, and say, "I will find the answer and get back to you" if needed.

Assume you are "off the record" with the media unless already agreed upon.

Use technical jargon.

Be defensive if you are asked a difficult question.



**Take a moment**

**Have you ever had to answer a tough or difficult question when engaging with the media? How did you handle it?**

Share your experience with your fellow Young Leaders in the **Module 4 Forum**

We are all here to learn from one another!

**After you have shared your advocacy goal in the Forum,  
continue to the next section.**

# Creating Your Social Media Strategy

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**Using social media, writing blog posts, and communicating through radio or podcasts are creative options to bring attention to your cause.**

**Social media can help you connect with other advocates around the world, share news, publicize your work, and build your network online and in the physical spaces where you work. Signing up is free, though using social networks effectively requires the investment of time to set up your profile, make connections, and keep content fresh and updated.**

Think of each social media profile you create as a “landing page” for your organization or issue. This landing page is possibly the first encounter someone is going to have with your cause, so you will want to make a good first impression and entice the visitor to want to know more about you and your work.

**Building a strong social media profile can also help you position yourself as a thought-leader or expert on a specific topic.**

**Social media can be used in multiple ways for your policy advocacy campaign. It can help you:**

- Find new campaign supporters
- Raise awareness and create public support for an issue
- Put public pressure on your primary target audience
- Connect with journalists, media makers, other advocates, and influencers
- Provide campaign updates to your supporters

There are a number of country- and region-specific social media platforms. When creating your social media plan, think about what platforms your audience uses most often. But do not overextend yourself—you do not need to be on every single platform—just choose the ones you can create enough updated content for and will be most likely to reach your target audience.

One of the best ways to learn more about social media is to just dive in. Create an initial page and explore. See which platforms your audience seems to be most active on and which ones your colleagues use. Social media platforms are constantly changing and updating, and one of the best ways to stay up to date is to interact directly with them.

## **TIPS FOR CREATING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY:**

- Set your objectives
- Identify the audience you want to reach
- Select the social media platforms you plan to focus on (there are a lot of options, so do not spread yourself too thin)
- Gather resources and materials to share through social media
- Appoint someone or a team of people to manage your social media presence
- Where appropriate, use relevant hashtags so others can find your content

**SOURCE:** [American Association of University Women, Social Media 101: Getting Started with Facebook and Twitter](#)

**Read on for essential examples and toolkits you can use to energize your social media strategy.**

# Social Media Tactics



## FACEBOOK

[Facebook](#) is one of the most widely used social media websites in the world, with more than [2 billion monthly average users](#). It offers several options for connecting with other users—personal pages, organizational pages, and groups. Explore Facebook to see how others are using these tools, then decide which combination works best for you.

### Facebook Toolkit

If you decide to use Facebook as a part of your social media strategy, there are many great ways to leverage this global platform. The **Facebook Toolkit** includes tips for strengthening your Facebook campaigns, as well as several examples of post types and when to use.

Download the **Facebook Toolkit** below to optimize your use of this platform in your campaign strategy.

### FACEBOOK TOOLKIT ↗

#### SHARE PHOTOS OF YOUR WORK IN ACTION



Women Deliver shared an album.  
September 28 at 10:14 AM · 🌐



#UNGA is about more than just presidents and prime ministers coming together — it's a convergence of powerful changemakers from around the globe. We are thrilled so many Women Deliver Young Leaders could be here in New York City to make their voices heard. 🌍



Toolkit\_Facebook.pdf 3.2 MB





# TWITTER

Twitter is a network for information sharing in real time and allows you to share your thoughts—280 characters at a time.

Twitter has become a go-to source for real-time news, especially news that traditional or state-run media might not report on or could report on in sensationalized or censored ways. It is a mechanism for people in the middle of the action to describe what is happening to them or in front of them. For instance, much of the initial reporting from the Arab Spring was done directly through Twitter. Twitter can also be a great platform to establish yourself as an expert to journalists who might be looking for sources to speak to about a news story.

Twitter allows you to share information with the world. You can share pictures or videos with your tweets. You can also include links that people can click for more information. In addition, you can include a hashtag, which is a word or phrase with the hash sign (#) attached to it. For example, you could use the hashtag #YoungLeader. You can easily find related tweets by searching for all the tweets that use the same hashtag.

## Twitter Toolkit

If you have yet to create a Twitter account for your organization or project, fear not! We have the resources to get you started. Download the **Twitter Toolkit** below to get tips on how best to use this platform in your campaign strategy, review our helpful Twitter glossary, and see many post examples from Women Deliver’s own Twitter campaigns to guide you as you develop your own.

### TWITTER TOOLKIT

WHEN USING TWITTER AS A PART OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY, USE THE FOLLOWING TIPS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR CAMPAIGN:

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF HASHTAGS

Using hashtags can be an integral part of your communications strategy. In some ways, hashtags can be the ultimate key message.

People sometimes refer to successful hashtags as social movements in and of themselves, such as #bringbackourgirls, #blacklivesmatter, or #metoo.

Hashtags are a powerful messaging, organizing, and mobilizing tool and can help to make or sustain a social movement.

#### CREATING KEY CONNECTIONS

One of the most powerful ways to use Twitter is to connect with other people. Twitter allows you to connect with people online who might be impossible to reach in person or even by email.

#### WHEN TO POST

Reach more people by using Twitter during the times of day that the audience you want to see your tweets is likely to be online. If you mention the Twitter handle of someone specific in your tweet, they will see it later, but otherwise your intended audience may not see it as Twitter feeds are constantly updating.

#### TWITTER LISTS

You can also create lists on Twitter of people related to certain subjects, issues, or locations. When you look at the list, you will only see the select group of people’s tweets. Lists are particularly useful if you follow a large number of people. If you make your list public, other people can see it and follow it. This can be a good way to connect with other people in your issue area.

#### SEPARATE ACCOUNTS

You may want to create a Twitter account for both yourself and your campaign. Multiple people can manage the campaign Twitter account, so it can be updated more often.



Toolkit\_Twitter.pdf 3 MB





## BLOGGING

A blog is a website with posts or entries updated regularly. Blog posts are different in style and tone than news articles. Generally speaking, blog posts are:

- Relatively short opinion pieces (approximately 300-500 words), focused on a narrow issue
- Concise and conversational in tone
- More “personalized” with stories and anecdotes
- Interactive, with links to articles and organizations
- Visually engaging, with photos and infographics
- Targeted to a specific engaged audience

**Remember:** It is not only about having your own “blog,” but also about writing blogs for other people’s sites. These sites often already have built-in audiences that you can tap into.

Writing for an existing blog can be even more effective than launching your own!

### Blogging Safety Toolkit

- **Privacy:** Only provide as much personal information on your blog as you want the world to know.
- **Professionalism:** Assume what you publish is permanent and accept that some of your readers and commentators may disagree with your opinions.
- **Legality:** Do not libel or attack others, do not plagiarize, and always cite your sources.
- **Caution:** Spammers often pose as commenters, so monitor your posts often.

For an example of a well-written advocacy blog, check out [this sample blog post](#) from a Women Deliver Young Leader.



## Tumblr

[Tumblr](#) is a microblogging and social media site. It allows the user to post lots of different types of content (pictures, videos, articles, etc.) to a short-form blog, and then people can repost your posts. Some describe it as a cross between a traditional blog and Twitter.

You can set up posts in advance and you can even program your Tumblr to post when you are not there. In another demonstration of the power of young people, Tumblr was created and launched by a 20-year-old!



## HIGHLY VISUAL PLATFORMS

Using visual imagery and video can be a great way to advance important social causes and help viewers and listeners see problems in new ways. It can leave audiences feeling excited about taking action and joining others to make a difference if the visuals make a strong argument, involve the viewer, and engage the audience in what happens next.

Do you have access to a camera or video camera? Does your phone take video or photos? Does your mobile phone have a recording device? If so, then you can make a short, compelling segment as a tool for advocacy!

### The following social media tools can help you get started:



[YouTube](#): A website full of many videos, and the world's second-largest search engine!

[Vimeo](#): A video-sharing website similar to YouTube, but with smaller audiences, no ads, and password-protected options.



[Instagram](#): Enables users to take pictures and short videos and share.

[Pinterest](#): Social networking website where you share pictures posted to different themed boards you create. Each picture can be linked to a different website.



[Snapchat](#): A video and photo messaging application for smartphones, where the images disappear after being read.

[Flickr](#): A website for storing and sharing photos.





# COMMUNICATING THROUGH RADIO AND PODCASTS

Icons by Ibrandify

Radio remains a primary form of media for many people, especially in rural communities. Using audio on the radio and in podcasts can be a great way to advance important social causes and engage viewers and listeners in new ways. Many times, rather than starting your own podcast, you can research what podcasts are popular with your audience and pitch them your story. It is often more successful to reach an existing audience than to try to build your own.

## For Your Consideration

## Using Women Delivery Branding

When advancing your advocacy in your capacity as a Women Deliver Young Leader, you are welcome to identify yourself as a Women Deliver Young Leader. For your ease, we have created a Young Leader logo, which can be downloaded [here](#) and used for your day-to-day needs in your advocacy work as a Young Leader.

No permission is needed to use the Young Leader logo in your materials.

Permission must be obtained, however, for use of the main Women Deliver organizational logo. You can send requests to use this logo and branding to [info@wdyoungleaders.org](mailto:info@wdyoungleaders.org).

## Conclusion

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**“If we do not center the voices of marginalized people, we are doing the wrong work.”**

*Tarana Burke, Founder of the #MeToo Movement*

**Communications and media are incredibly powerful tools to leverage in your advocacy efforts! In particular, digital media has rapidly transformed the way that advocacy for sexual and reproductive health and rights can be performed.**

This module has given you a broad overview of strategic media advocacy as well as practical media and communications skills to support your advocacy so you can make informed choices about when, how, and to whom you communicate externally in pursuit of gender equality.

In the final module, you will learn how to develop an advocacy proposal that you can submit to Women Deliver for funding consideration during the next Young Leaders Program grant cycle!

## **BEFORE YOU GO, FOLLOW WOMEN DELIVER!**

If you have not done so already, be sure to connect with Women Deliver on all of our social media platforms! As we share your work through these outlets, connecting with us will spread to all the Young Leaders.

[Women Deliver Newsletter](#)

[Women Deliver Twitter](#)

[Youth Deliver Twitter](#)

[Women Deliver Facebook](#)

[Women Deliver Youth Deliver Facebook](#)

[Women Deliver Instagram](#)

[Women Deliver LinkedIn](#)

[Women Deliver Flickr](#)

[Women Deliver YouTube](#)



## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

### True/False:

When advancing your advocacy in your capacity as a Women Deliver Young Leader, you are welcome to use the Young Leader logo in your materials. No permission is needed. Permission must be obtained, however, for use of the main Women Deliver organizational logo.

True

False



**Correct**

You must **ALWAYS** obtain permission for use of the Women Deliver organizational logo. Consider using the Young Leader logo instead as you do not need permission for use of it in your day-to-day Young Leader advocacy branding needs.



**Incorrect**

You must **ALWAYS** obtain permission for use of the Women Deliver organizational logo. Consider using the Young Leader logo instead as you do not need permission for use of it in your day-to-day Young Leader advocacy branding needs.

# DIGITAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Throughout Digital University, you will find resources we have found to be highly valuable to understanding gender equality and SDGs, such as articles, briefs, infographics, and partner sites. Be sure to review these resources and use them to further enhance your knowledge on your journey.

**Click the button to be taken to the library.**



**Almost done! To complete the module and move forward, please complete the post assessment questions.**