

#DEFYHATENOW

Social Media and Hate Speech

#defyhatenow responds to South Sudan's ongoing civil crisis to address the roles played by social media users in both fuelling or mitigating conflict, and offers training on how social media can be used in a constructive and peacebuilding manner.

Initiated in 2014 in response to the South Sudan political and civil crisis, #defyhatenow is designed to develop strategies to counter online hate speech and encourage responsible use of social media.

"#defyhatenow is addressing a crucial issue. I think it is very important that people have a critical approach to social media. Language is beautiful. You can create beautiful songs, poems, literature but language can also be a poison and people are not aware of it. Language can instill hatred."

Jan Hendrik van Thiel, German Ambassador to South Sudan.

Enhancing Civil Society

#defyhatenow's partners include independent youth, women's and civil society groups spanning South Sudan and its neighbours, Uganda, Kenya and Sudan, with numerous correspondents internationally. Collaborating with major peacebuilding initiatives such as ANATABAN and having worked with organisations including CEPO, the University of Juba, PeaceTech Lab, Article 19, JHR, and agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UMINSS and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, #defyhatenow has been working to create a transnational network setting an agenda to counter hate speech both online and offline.

Social Media Hate Speech Mitigation Field Guide

The Field Guide is a training toolkit developed and published by #defyhatenow to be used by community-based organizations and online campaigns for peace building. The Field Guide includes a guidebook, workshop materials with quick reference tips; concept cards and illustration posters; handouts and exercises; 8GB USB media & audio, quick reference poster and #defyhatenow board game. Parts of the Field Guide are translated into Arabic and local languages.

100 copies of the Field Guide were distributed among civil society institutions, journalists and activists. Many recipients are already using it for their individual training measures.



"The feedback from my trainers is that the Field Guide helped them to identify these types of words, and it helped them to catch these words in their coverage at their media placement."

Laura Bain, Journalists for Human Rights, South Sudan Team Leader. Laura participated in a Field Guide training and uses it now for their own workshops.

GoGirls ICT

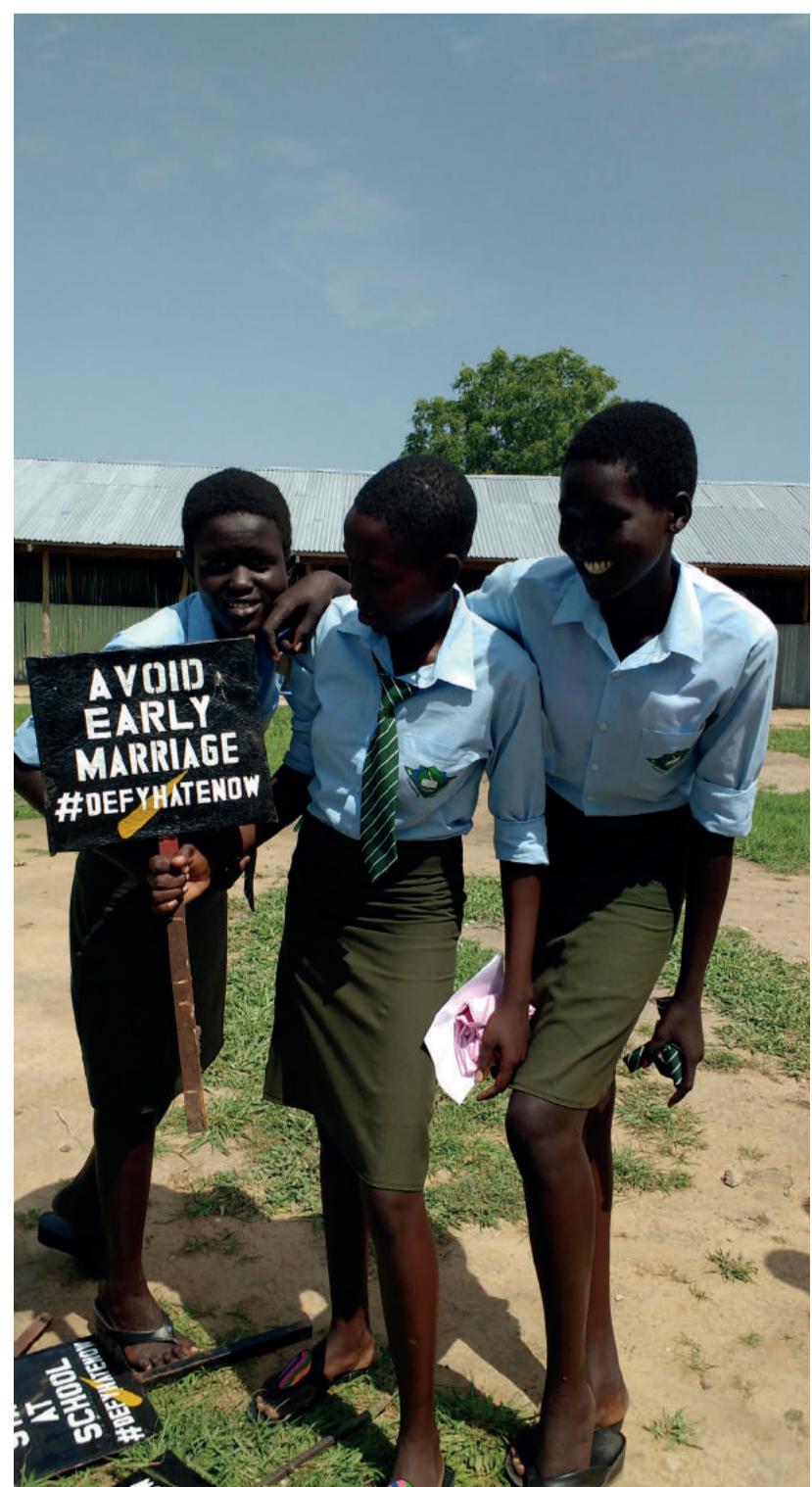
GoGirls ICT is #defyhatenow's partner for their training to promote the use of ICT among girls and women. Founded by Eva Yati and Yine Yenki, the initiative focuses on mentoring girls and empowers women to be more involved in the ICT field.

"We work to see girls taking advantage of ICT technologies and being empowered, being able to support themselves and build the future they want."

Yine Yenki, GoGirls ICT

Female Leadership & Equality

In South Sudan's civil society girls and women are still marginalized and underrepresented in public decision making. Women have less access to media and digital tools and girls often face disadvantages in accessing education. Raising awareness about the situation of women and girls, and empowering women to be confident in expressing themselves is a key aim of #defyhatenow's work.



"#defyhatenow as a project is unique. It addresses hate speech online, no one did what this project was trying to achieve. People come together, they talk, they wake up and realize they never saw hate speech as a problem."

John Jal Dak,
Founder of YSAT,
Rhino Camp, Uganda

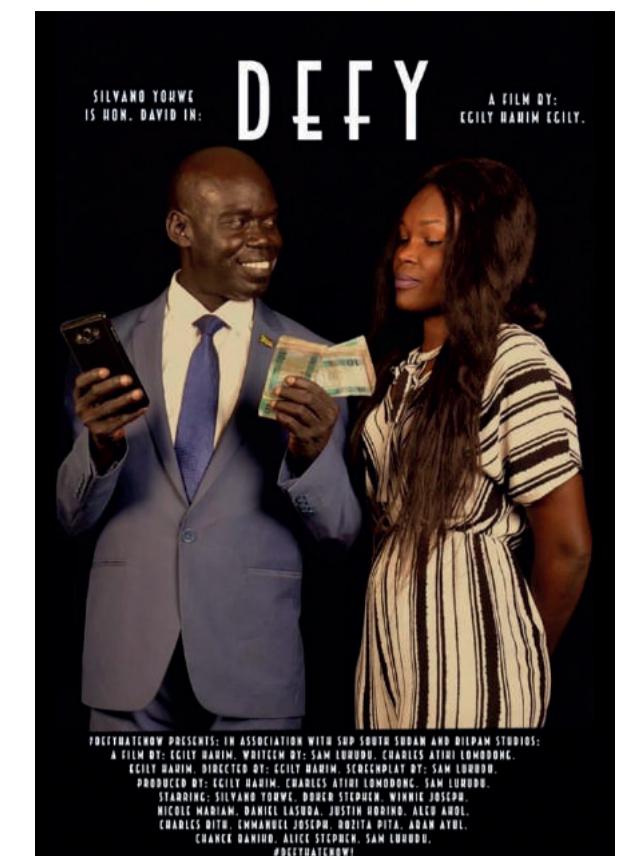


#defyhatenow has strengthened the voices of civil society actors and helped build capacities to mitigate hate speech amongst South Sudanese civil society organisations and individuals.

#DEFYthefilm

Short film produced and released as part of #defyhatenow's capacity building and cultural activities. #DEFY tells the story of fictional senior politician Honourable David's new found passion for social media and the risks that come with using these platforms to spread propaganda and rumours.

The narrative of this fictional drama addresses the effects of hate speech through narrative storytelling. The video was released in 2018, and has been screened to audiences across South Sudan, as well as Uganda, Sudan, Kenya, Germany and the USA.



"It's very important that South Sudanese tell stories about their own people and their own experience."

Audience feedback after premiere screening in Juba.

Building Organisational Capacities

#defyhatenow was founded by r0g_agency, a Berlin based non-profit agency for open culture and critical transformation. Coordinated from Berlin, the project is managed and facilitated locally by a network of teams and partners in South Sudan, Sudan, Kenya and refugee settlements such as Rhino Camp, Bweyale and Adjumani in Uganda. #defyhatenow's training activities encouraged participants to become active and get involved in the creation of initiatives. As a result participants started setting up their own grassroots organizations to continue the work within their local communities.

South Sudanese Diaspora Connections

In Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Canada and Egypt meetups and forums helped to connect the fragmented South Sudanese diaspora communities. Discussions revolved around issues such as the South Sudanese identity or the perception of ethnic stereotypes, and encouraged a better understanding between members of host and South Sudanese communities, and helped to re-connect diaspora South Sudanese with their home country.

"The project has strengthened my bond to the South Sudanese community by refreshing my understanding and reforming my thoughts about South Sudanese. I was able to see a different angle to the issue, especially with those who are half-Sudanese and half-South Sudanese."

**Bweyale - Engaging Youth**

"After the training, the groups we train formed youth associations or groups. You find, when different youths from different tribes and cultures work together and appreciate each others culture, it reduces chances of conflict in the community. In the camp #defyhatenow has been recognized for bringing youth together."

Otim Francis on a drama workshop with young refugees at the camp in Bweyale, Uganda. There are frequently conflicts between the different tribes living in the camp often around issues such as access to resources.

**Social Media #PeaceJam**

The Social Media #PeaceJam is a combined online and offline campaign that takes place every year on September 21, International Day of Peace. During the #PeaceJam, South Sudanese occupy the global social media landscape with peacebuilding, taking action against hate, conflict and incitement to violence with positive cultural messages.

Use #peacejam #SouthSudan and #defyhatenow hashtags on your social media posts to help track the South Sudanese use of online channels for positive cultural change and gain an understanding of the social media peace landscape of South Sudan.

#Music4Peace

Music plays an important role in South Sudan's society and is often used as a channel for the distribution of political messages. As part of #defyhatenow's cultural outreach activities a number of songs were produced to reach young South Sudanese refugees and promote #defyhatenow's peacebuilding agenda through radio, still the most important communication channel for rural communities.

#Peace4All
#Peace4All was written and produced by #defyhatenow activists Jaikansa and Freeboy Adams. South Sudanese living in Rhino Camp, Abyei. It was launched in March 2017.

#ThinkB4Uclick
As part of the awareness campaign on fake news, the song #ThinkB4Uclick was written and recorded by musician Freeboy Adams with singers and musicians at Rhino Camp, Uganda.

#Kifaya
#Kifaya is the result of workshop by Talent21 entertainment, Platform Africa and #defyhatenow to magnify the voices of South Sudanese musicians as peace builders in the diaspora. The video features South Sudanese nationals of all ages and genders and was shot at Rhino Camp before the #PeaceJam18 concert.



"We sometimes forget that our online voices reach a wider audience than just our friends. Having a platform online empowers all of us to share our thoughts and contribute to global discussions. It's important to choose your words wisely, and use them to promote understanding, tolerance and peace online and offline."

Participant, Bloggers Workshop, Nairobi

Facilitating Change - Enabling Intercultural Dialogue

When a quarrel broke out between refugees in Rhino Camp, Uganda, it escalated into a fight between Dinka and Nuer communities, which led to the deaths of four people and the displacement of dozens of families. After the incident, #defyhatenow partner YSAT took the initiative to bring community leaders together in a meeting of all ethnic groups present in Rhino Camp to discuss a strategy on how to address recent conflicts and identify the needs of the communities. The event was organized as a collaborative effort by #defyhatenow, Oxfam, UNHCR and OPM, Official Camp Security. Representatives from over 40 tribes attended the event which was covered by local and national media and attracted attention from South Sudanese abroad.

Local Hate Speech Regulations

The community initiative Youth for Peace and Development (YPD) started working with #defyhatenow in 2018. They conduct awareness trainings with local communities in Eastern Lake States, Warrap State and Jonglei with community leaders and teachers. Support from local politicians includes the Commissioner of Yilo County and the Governor of Jonglei state. Their work resulted in the creation of active school clubs and after one training the community decided to introduce a ban against music which is aimed to directly incite hate in communities against each other, played on local radio stations in Eastern Lake States.

Raising Awareness of Hate Speech Online

#defyhatenow developed seminars and trainings to raise awareness about the issue of hate speech, increase skills and media literacy and build capacity for positive social media content creation and cultural campaigning within an alternative media discourse.

Workshops focus on creating awareness among civil society actors and enabling activists to use social media in a responsible manner.



"The Information Minister of Yilo participated in the training, and decided to officially tell the people of the state that we have to avoid hate speech... now we are slowly monitoring if hate speech is still being played on radio."

Founder Gak Abraham

"Most of the participants had no idea about hate speech and its impact within the community of Western Equatoria. They have accepted that it exists."

Participant



"The training has inspired me to start an initiative to mitigate hate speech both online and offline. Now we have that initiative working for peace throughout the mitigation of hate speech."

Patrick Chandiga Justine,
founder of community
based organisation CECI
in Koboko, Uganda.

Encouraging Reconciliation

#defyhatenow's meetings and trauma workshops offered space and capacities for participants to discuss traumatic experiences of war which often is a first step towards reconciliation. Under the guidance of experienced trainers, the first steps of the complex reconciliation process were taken by enabling participants to share experiences and understand the physiological reaction to trauma.

"When people start talking about the trauma, they acknowledge that they have a problem. Being able to share a story, you actually remove a burden from yourself." Aineypoono Sharlotte Kigezo, psychologist, #defyhatenow trainer and activist for Platform Africa.



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