Norms-shifting on Social Media

A landscaping of programming

WORKING PAPER

JULY 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF FIGURES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Introduction

Social norms are unwritten "rules" governing behavior shared by members of a given group or society. They are informal, often implicit, rules that most people accept and abide by. In contrast to individually held attitudes or beliefs, a social norm is defined by beliefs that are shared within a group (e.g. reference group) about a behavior or practice. They influence what people do and are expected to do. Social norms can shape behaviors related to sexual debut, gender-based violence (GBV), and early marriage, and affect young people's access to the education, services, and information they need to protect their health. Research shows that investing in social norms change at the community and individual levels – while ensuring supportive policies and access to high-quality services – can bring about significant improvements in reproductive health and well-being (Family Planning High Impact Practices, 2022).

The Passages project is a USAID-funded, seven-year implementation research project that aims to address a broad range of social norms, at scale, to achieve sustained improvements in family planning (FP), sexual and reproductive health (SRH), such as GBV, child marriage or unintended pregnancies. Since 2015, Passages has implemented and evaluated norms-shifting approaches to build the evidence base and contribute to the capacity of the global community to understand and shift norms to strengthen reproductive health environments.

Throughout the project's years, Passages' initial phases centered on establishing an evidence base, providing technical assistance, and building a network of partners and programs. This included developing and launching new initiatives at the country, regional, and global levels that share goals of advancing the work on scaling up normative change at the community level. This has included contributing to the field definitions of **community- based norms shifting interventions** (The Learning Collaborative to Advance Normative Change, 2017) and providing literature and practitioner-informed lists of common attributes that are commonly associated with effective norms-shifting interventions, particularly in global health. Through various global leadership technical events and workshops, unexplored questions continue to emerge; one such question is **whether, how, and to what extent social norms can be shifted through and on social media platforms, with a focus on adolescent global health programming.** This working paper seeks to build upon and advance the Passages project efforts, which have primarily focused on norms-shifting at the community level, to contribute to a growing discussion on how norms are formed and shifted through social media programming.

Background

Social norms, as perceptions of social expectations of typical and appropriate behavior within a valued reference group (Mackie et al., 2015), can dictate what people in a group believe is typical (normal) and appropriate (approved) behavior. These ideas represent two types of social norms: 1) descriptive norms are perceptions about what other people do, and 2) injunctive norms are expectations about what people should do, as well as perceived consequences of adhering to a norm or not (Rimal & Lapinski, 2015; Rimal & Real, 2005). Individual behavior is influenced by both descriptive social norms and by injunctive social norms. Within this framing, descriptive norms hold a direct influence over behavior, as people are more likely to engage in a behavior, they perceive to be common. Injunctive norms, group identity, and the perceived benefits or detriments of engaging in a behavior (also called rewards or sanctions) impact the influence of descriptive norms over behavior. In addition to social norms, other factors such as agency, self-efficacy, and the broader enabling environment play a role in determining the uptake and continuation of a behavior. Further, behavior is further influenced by how diffusion of messaging occurs across levels and channels and in and out of communities (Rogers, 2003). Understanding how social norms affect adolescent behaviors online and on social media represents a new challenge.

Situating norms-shifting interventions at the community level

There are many examples of programs that have been effective in shifting social norms. Many of these programs often seek to correct misperceptions using strategies such as small group interventions, informational campaigns, and mass media. Other mechanisms for norm change include legal reform, role modeling and efforts to change power dynamics. Effective norms-shifting programs may not look the same, but are often multi-level, informed by protective norms (those building on existing positive values) and rooted in contextual information (IRH, 2019).

At the community level, the six program strategies (peer support, interpersonal dialogue, social mobilization, collective celebration, training and awareness raising, and increasing individual capacities) utilized in Passages community-based interventions (as described in its [Theory of Change (IRH, 2020)](#)) are specifically designed to lead to norms shifting, and tie directly to some of the common attributes of norms-shifting interventions (The Learning Collaborative to Advance Normative Change, 2017), including: (1) engaging people at multiple levels; (2) seeking community-level change; (3) creating safe space for critical reflection by community members; (4) using organized diffusion; (5) rooting the issue within community's own value systems; (6) correcting misperceptions around harmful behaviors; (7) confronting power imbalances; (8) creating positive new norms; and (9) accurately assessing norms. For example, numerous Passages strategies align with the attribute of *engaging people at multiple levels*, including peer support, increasing individual and community capacities, collective celebration, pledges, and testimonials, and fostering and

linking with youth-friendly health services. Additionally, training and raising awareness of positive role models and interpersonal dialogue on reflection and beliefs both align with the attribute t*o root issues in the community's own value system*, and social mobilization works to create community-level change (The Learning Collaborative to Advance Normative Change, 2017).

Passages interventions draw foundationally from the social ecological model, which describes that individuals are embedded in environments with multiple levels of influence. Such multi-level interventions may aim to influence intrapersonal factors, including an individual's behavior, attitudes, and agency; interpersonal and group processes,

Figure 1. Common attributes of community-level norms-shifting interventions

including broad social networks as well as relationships, family units and schools; and community factors, which encompass relationships between both informal and formal networks within community structures. Formal networks are the relations people use – and are supposed to use – to communicate with one another within organizations. Informal networks concern all other relations. Within this framework, interventions draw from other social and behavior change (SBC) theories. The internet, and social media in particular, provide a new environment that can be addressed in multi-layered SBC interventions.

Where do social media interventions fit in?

Media behaviors of today's audiences have diversified (Hasebrink & Hepp, 2017; Kim, 2016; Taneja et al., 2012; Webster & Ksiazek, 2012). Across the world, audiences are drawn to various online platforms, apps and online communities to consume and exchange content on a diverse range of topics (Alleyne, 2015; Blank & Reisdorf, 2012; Jenkins et al., 2013; Livingstone, 2015). Various studies have shown that consuming, creating or engagement with social media content can touch upon health issues and can reflect and reinforce ideas or values relative to health within communities of social media users (Fowler et al., 2021; Harris et al., 2021; Hodgson et al., 2019; Russell et al., 2021). A study assessing ways that offline perceptions of social norms influence whether adolescents engage in risky sexual behaviors online showed that both descriptive and injunctive norms influenced behaviors (Baumgartner et al., 2011), with descriptive norms having a more significant bearing on behavior over time, demonstrating, that adolescents may be more interested in what their peers are doing vs. peers' approval of their behavior.

Research has also shown that engagement with social media content can affect knowledge, attitudes, norms, and thereby affect behaviors – positively as well as negatively (Chin et al., 2021; Iskarpatyoti et al., 2017; Lewis et al., 2018; Purba et al., 2021; Wombacher et al., 2017). For example: a study found that pictures of unhealthy sleeping environments for infants on Instagram receive more likes (approval; injunctive norm), may therefore be posted more often (what most people do; descriptive norm), and young parents may adopt unhealthy sleeping environments for their infants (Chin et al., 2021). A content analysis of sexual education content on TikTok showed that social media platforms also provide opportunities to address and shift social norms using themes that are not addressed by most sexual education programs in schools such as female anatomy and sexual pleasure (Fowler et al., 2021). Although most of the studies to date focused on analyzing user-generated content (i.e.: pictures and videos that were not tied to any larger intervention or initiative) they illustrate how social media content can affect norms and may be leveraged to influence them.

On social media, development organizations have less control over how and what content ultimately arrives at the end-users' screens: compared to mass media, it can be more challenging to reach and engage audience members. What content is seen is often the result of a dynamic interplay between individuals' social networks, social media algorithms and human behaviors (González-Bailón, 2017; Helmond, 2015; Mukerjee et al., 2018; Pariser, 2012), and social media content varies from being visible publicly (on 'open' social media pages) to privately (on 'closed' social media pages or (group) chats). What this complex interplay means is well-illustrated by a recent study showing the interactions between the rating systems of comments section of newspaper websites, social norms, and online behaviors (Shmargad et al., 2021). The study found that repeated negative commenting by the same person was more likely when their comments were affirmed by (1) descriptive norms (presence of other negative comments) and (2) injunctive norms (up votes). As rating systems often place comments with the most upvotes on top of the comment sections, norms, behaviors, and algorithms seem to interact. The infrastructures of digital media platforms thus also seem to have potential to influence norms (Diepeveen, 2022; Kryston & Fitzgerald, 2021; Shmargad et al., 2021).

Peer influence, social interaction, and widening access to more available, shared and tailored information have been identified as the main advantages of using social media for SBC (Raftree, 2019). And yet, no standard definition of social norms-shifting social media interventions seems to exist to date. In understanding programming approaches and strategies to shift norms on social media, we need to look at how they are designed, implemented, what behavioral change theories drive them and how they stimulate or affect processes that shape norms and ultimately behavior change. This working paper therefore **aims to make an inventory of the numerous strategies that development organizations have used for norm-shifting on social media.** This working paper proposes a typology of strategies, identifies what is known about the norms-shifting of each strategy, and identifies knowledge gaps to be unpacked in future research.

Working Paper Methods

Search Strategy

In developing this working paper, we reviewed peer-reviewed academic and grey literature of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods evaluations that included at least one component designed to address social norms or related constructs via social media, and in which the target population was primarily adolescents (10-19) and young adults (20-35). Initially, we searched for interventions in Low and/or Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) that focused on adolescent SRH, but this resulted in a low number of articles. As a result, the focus was dropped for a broader global health lens. Included studies went beyond focusing on individual attitudes and used approaches to reach or mobilize groups and engage them in reflection or discussion on perceptions of normative beliefs, shift social norms, or build positive norms.

Our search strategy was broadly inclusive and designed to be comprehensive within the peer-reviewed literature. We conducted a structured search of four databases—CINAHL, Embase, PsycINFO, and PubMed—in March 2022. We also explored accepted abstracts to the following Conferences: International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP), Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) Summit (English and French), and Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) Forum, for the last 10 years. Search terms from the following categories were chained into search queries to find the target literature: target population[*], social norms[†], target behaviors[‡], target geography[§] and date range[**]. After initial screening of the results, a second search excluding the terms relative to target behaviors and target geography was conducted to include a larger number of records. Additional snowball searching was conducted using relevant citations in articles included in our review and other literature reviews, leading to a list of 2,772 unique publications.

To identify unpublished grey literature, a broad search[††] was also conducted through Google Scholar (one time with, and one time without excluding peer-reviewed articles), and the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Development Experience Clearinghouse and Development Data Library, which is their online repository for all publicly available program materials and studies. The grey

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[*] ("youth" OR "teen*" OR "girl" OR "young female" OR "young adult" OR "adolescen*" OR "young woman" OR "young person" OR "boy" OR "young male" OR "young man")

[†] ("social norm*" OR "gender norm*" OR "norm*" OR "norm change" OR "normative shift*" OR "normative intervention" OR "societal norm*")

[‡] ("sexual*" OR "sexual health" OR "sexual behavior" OR "sexual experience" OR "sexual activity" OR "early sexual debut" OR "sexual initiation" OR "pregnan*" OR "teenage pregnancy" OR "reproductive health" OR "reproductive empowerment" OR "family planning services" OR "contraception" OR "condom*" OR "family planning" OR "gender-based violence" OR "intimate partner violence" OR "sexual harassment" OR "violence" OR "sexual coercion" OR "rape" OR "sexual violence" OR "parental communication" OR "puberty" OR "sex" education" OR "child marriage" OR "early marriage" OR "gender roles" OR "gender" OR "menstruation" OR "menstrual hygiene" OR "female genital cutting" OR "female genital mutilation" OR "pregnancy in adolescence"[mh] OR "gender identity" [mh] OR "coercion"[mh] OR "condoms"[mh])

[§] ("developing countr*" OR "developing nation*" OR "low middle income countr*" OR "third world countr*" OR "third world nation*" OR "least developed countr*" OR "least developed nation*" OR "under-developed countr*" OR "under-developed nation*" OR "less developed countr*" OR "less developed nation*" OR "developing nation*" OR "developing nation*" OR "global south")

[**] (2010:2022 [dp])

[††] Search query 1: 'social norms + social media + AYSRH'; Search query 2: 'norm-shifting interventions + social media + AYSRH'
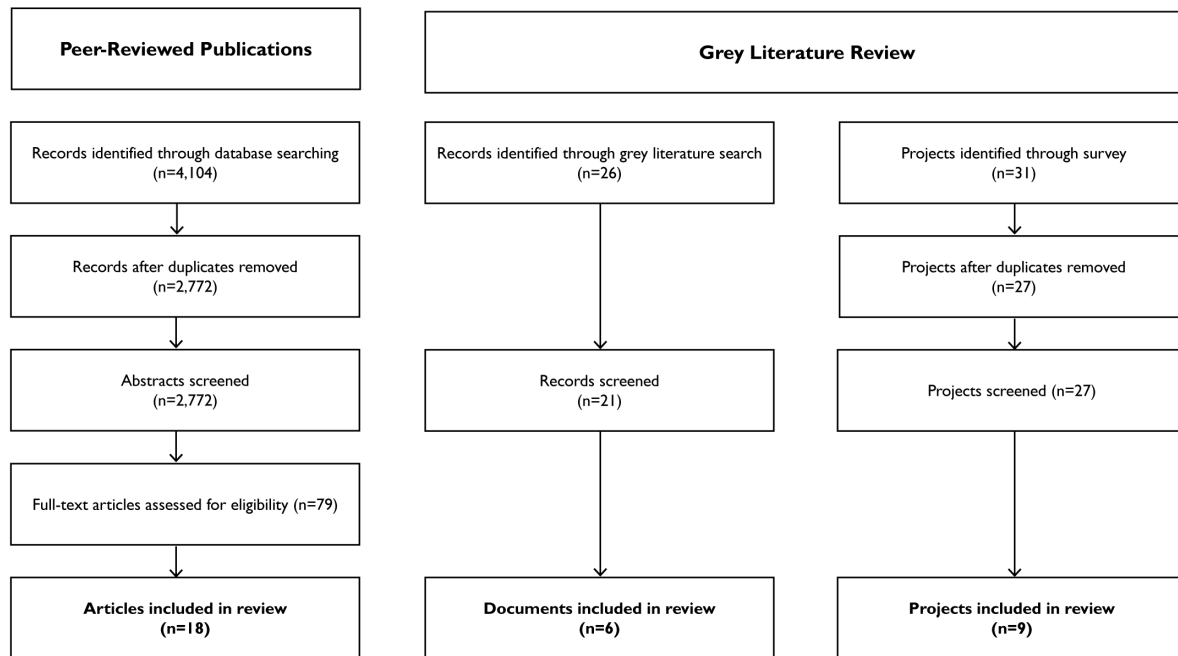
literature search identified 26 unique program evaluations, reports, process documentation, manuals, and briefs for consideration. Furthermore, we sent requests for program documentation through a stakeholder survey distributed through the Passages project contact list (with additional individuals purposefully selected based on prior knowledge of expertise in social media programming in SBC), leading to a list of 27 unique programs for which we retrieved available evaluations, reports, process documentation, and information on the associated websites.

Study Selection & Synthesis of Results

For published peer-reviewed articles obtained through database search, the review process was managed in Covidence Online Software and abstracts were screened by one team member, selecting a list of 79 articles for further assessment. The selected full-text articles were assessed on inclusion and exclusion criteria by at least one reviewer, with any uncertainty resolved as a group. Articles were selected if they described or evaluated an intervention that included at least one component designed to address social norms or related constructs via social media, and in which the target population was primarily adolescents (10-19) and young adults (20-35). We decided to include interventions from countries beyond LMICs and interventions focusing on issues broader than SRH, resulting in **18 selected articles**. We used the same inclusion and exclusion criteria on the grey literature, while also excluding publications or reports if dated prior to 2010. Furthermore, interventions that exclusively used group methods only to disseminate information rather than to address social norms or provided insufficient information about norms-focused components were excluded. We selected **6 documents** from the grey literature search and **9 projects** from the stakeholder survey that then met the final criteria (see **Figure 2** for a representation of the inclusion flow chart).

Data extracted into spreadsheets included the authors' stated objectives, research methods, study population, theories and models referenced, relevant norms, and degree of attention to social norms. We also noted the program components (e.g., entry point, activities) for studies that included interventions to address social norms. When comparative trials or quantitative or qualitative program evaluations were conducted, relevant results were extracted although most of the evaluations did not address the role of social media components specifically. Multiple documents on the same study or project were reviewed together and results were combined.

Peer-Reviewed Publications		Grey Literature Review	

Records identified through database searching (n=4,104)	Records identified through grey literature search (n=26)	Projects identified through survey (n=31)
Records after duplicates removed (n=2,772)		Projects after duplicates removed (n=27)
Abstracts screened (n=2,772)	Records screened (n=21)	Projects screened (n=27)
Full-text articles assessed for eligibility (n=79)		
Articles included in review (n=18)	Documents included in review (n=6)	Projects included in review (n=9)

Stakeholder Input

The included interventions varied greatly in their approaches, aims, and implied mechanisms of behavioral or norms change. To make a better comparison, we aimed to gather detailed information on interventions included in this review via expert interviews. We asked five experts who worked on four standout interventions about their goals and strategies, implied change mechanisms, implementation, ethical issues, and their main learning points. Furthermore, the expert sessions informed the case studies included in this working paper.

Finally, a draft of this working paper was discussed in a ½ day virtual consultation with 24 international experts from SBC, communications, social norms, and adolescent-focused programs and organizations. The working paper was presented, and sessions focused on soliciting feedback on the overall framework provided (**figure 3**) and the alignment with community-based norms-shifting interventions. The working paper was later revised according to feedback provided from consultation participants, with a focus on recommendations and conclusions.

Emerging Findings

The interventions selected for this working paper all include social media components that aimed to shift norms or contribute to norm shifting. Yet, the interventions vary greatly in their goals (i.e.: shifting norms on the individual to more collective levels), approaches (i.e.: from the delivery of personalized normative feedback to co-creating peer-led interventions), implied mechanisms of behavioral change (i.e.: from the theory of planned behavior to socio-ecological models) and the platforms of choice (e.g.: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Tiktok, etc.). In understanding programming approaches and strategies to shift norms on social media, we need to look at how they are designed, implemented, and how they stimulate or affect processes that shape norms, and ultimately behavior change.

To identify and categorize common strategies to shift social norms on social media, we have mapped the strategies that were used in the selected interventions

Box 1. Defining terms
Personalized Normative Feedback (PNF) aims to correct misperceptions regarding the prevalence of certain behavior by showing media content which portrays individuals engaging in other behaviors. (Neighbors et al., 2015).
Social proof is a psychological and social phenomenon wherein people copy the actions of others in a given situation (Cialdini, 1987; Cialdini & Trost, 1998). On social media, social proof materializes in comments or other kinds of engagements with media content that reinforce the message that it is responding to.

along two axes: 1) ***visibility*** (i.e.: on which parts of social media interventions are visible), and 2) ***approach*** (i.e.: whether the strategies are characterized by a community-based or communication-based approach). We have derived common strategies from the selected interventions and mapped them onto the framework presented in **Figure 3**[*]. Before describing these strategies, the following paragraphs will elaborate on what is meant by visibility and approach.

Visibility
Open vs. Closed Social Media

The interventions selected for this working paper have leveraged various social media platforms in ways that are publicly visible (on public social media pages and profiles) or only available to a confined group of users (on 'closed' social media pages and/or (group) chats), see **Box 2**. In categorizing the interventions, we defined *open social media* as the parts of social media that are publicly accessible and/or where engagement is publicly visible. This includes 1) public pages and profiles and all the content associated with these pages such as posts and live streams, 2) comment sections where users respond to articles, videos, or other types of content; and 3) open group pages that can be joined without an administrator having to accept a request for membership. We defined *closed social media* as the parts of social media that are not publicly accessible

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[*] For the categorization of the selected interventions, see Annex I.

such as 1) closed group pages where administrators manage who is granted access in response to requests for membership, 2) chat groups where three or more people exchange instant messages or interact with a chatbot, 3) private chats where two individuals exchange instant messages, or one individual interacts with a chatbot.

<div style="background:#e0e0e0; padding:1em;">

Box 2. Moving Towards a Typology of Intervention Visibility on Social Media

- *Open social media:* Those parts of social media that are publicly accessible and/or where engagement is publicly visible. This includes 1) **public pages** and **profiles** and all the content associated with these pages such as posts and live streams, 2) **comment sections** where uses respond to articles, videos, or other types of content; and 3) **open group pages** that can be joined without an administrator having to accept a request for membership.

- *Closed social media*: Parts of social media that are not publicly accessible such as 1) **closed group pages** where administrators manage who is granted access in response to requests for membership, 2) **chat groups** where three or more people exchange instant messages, or interact with a chat bot, 3) **private chats** where two individuals exchange instant messages or one individual interacts with a **chat bot**.

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How algorithms affect visibility

Visibility impacts which groups an intervention ultimately reaches. On social media, social ties, patterns of interest, and algorithms play an important role in the delivery of media content. For example, media content that is posted on open sections of social media platforms – such as public Instagram profiles, YouTube channels, or Facebook pages – is often only added to the timelines of those pages' or persons' most faithful followers before being shown to larger proportions of followers, and only if the initial group has shown positive engagement (e.g.: 'dwell time', likes, comments). Simply put, when audiences directly engage with social media posts, algorithms may extend the exposure of these posts to peers in the engaging audiences' social networks. This works similarly for closed profiles or pages, while in (group) chats, messages become instantly visible to all members without the interference of algorithms – that is, unless a (group) chat has been muted by the user.

Norms-shifting across multiple levels of visibility

Interventions can have their own -public profiles or pages and/or utilize the timelines of individual social media users or peer-influencers. Social media posts or messages may exert normative influence on a user (Chin et al., 2021; Iskarpyyoti et al., 2017; Lewis et al., 2018; Purba et al., 2021; Wombacher et al., 2017), but may also receive long threads of comments that potentially exert normative influence too (Shmargad et al., 2021). For example, exposure to posts showing peers drinking heavily can affect the extent to which one thinks binge drinking occurs, is socially acceptable, and is a way to have a good time with friends. Comments can further reinforce this (descriptive norm). Such posts and/or comments being liked or responded to positively affect the injunctive norm. These comments, however, are only visible to individuals that have

been exposed to the social media post via their timelines and only if they choose to scroll through comments.

Figure 3 provides an overview of the strategies that can be used to shift norms or contribute to norm shifting across the level of visibility:

- The most open parts of social media (i.e.: public pages and groups) are leveraged to address community-level processes. At that level, the selected interventions aim to circulate and/or creating social proof to shift descriptive norms and stimulating processes that reward the desired kind of behavior to shift injunctive norms. Addressing norms at the community level is effective in making norms at that level more visible.
- This also applies to smaller groups on open as well as closed social media. Yet, the more private character of these layers allows to focus on a more specific target group. Groups and group chats are mostly leveraged to address interpersonal and/or group processes by providing information addressing sensitive topics (primarily impacting descriptive norms) and by fostering peer support (primarily injunctive norms).
- Intrapersonal factors such as knowledge and attitudes were addressed at all levels of social media, yet it plays a more supportive role in that it can introduce information capable of shifting knowledge and values that disseminate through reinforcement and other processes offered by social media platforms.

Approaches
Communication-Based vs. Community-Based

Across the social media space, the norm-shifting interventions selected for this review are characterized by various approaches to reach and/or engage their respective target groups. Across these differences, we distinguished two different approaches: *communication-based* and *community-based* approaches. We defined communication-based approaches to norms-shifting on social media, as interventions that tailor media content or messages to audiences to shift norms. Often, such interventions are designed to deliver (personalized) normative media content or messages via (1) social media posts on public pages and profiles, often boosted via social advertising, (2) open and closed social media groups, (3) closed chat groups and instant messaging. We have defined community-based approaches to norms shifting on social media leverage social capital in (online) communities to shift norms to reach the right audiences. Such interventions are designed to involve and empower target groups to create (social media) content and stimulate online engagement in its wake, either through offline trainings and workshops or through online collaborative platforms or social media groups. Community-based intervention approaches inspire audiences to (1) share, post, and comment as well as to (2) tag and/or challenge their peers via their own profile pages, in social media groups, and via chat groups and instant messaging.

Figure 3 provides an overview of the strategies that can be used to shift norms or contribute to norm shifting within communication-based and community-based approaches:
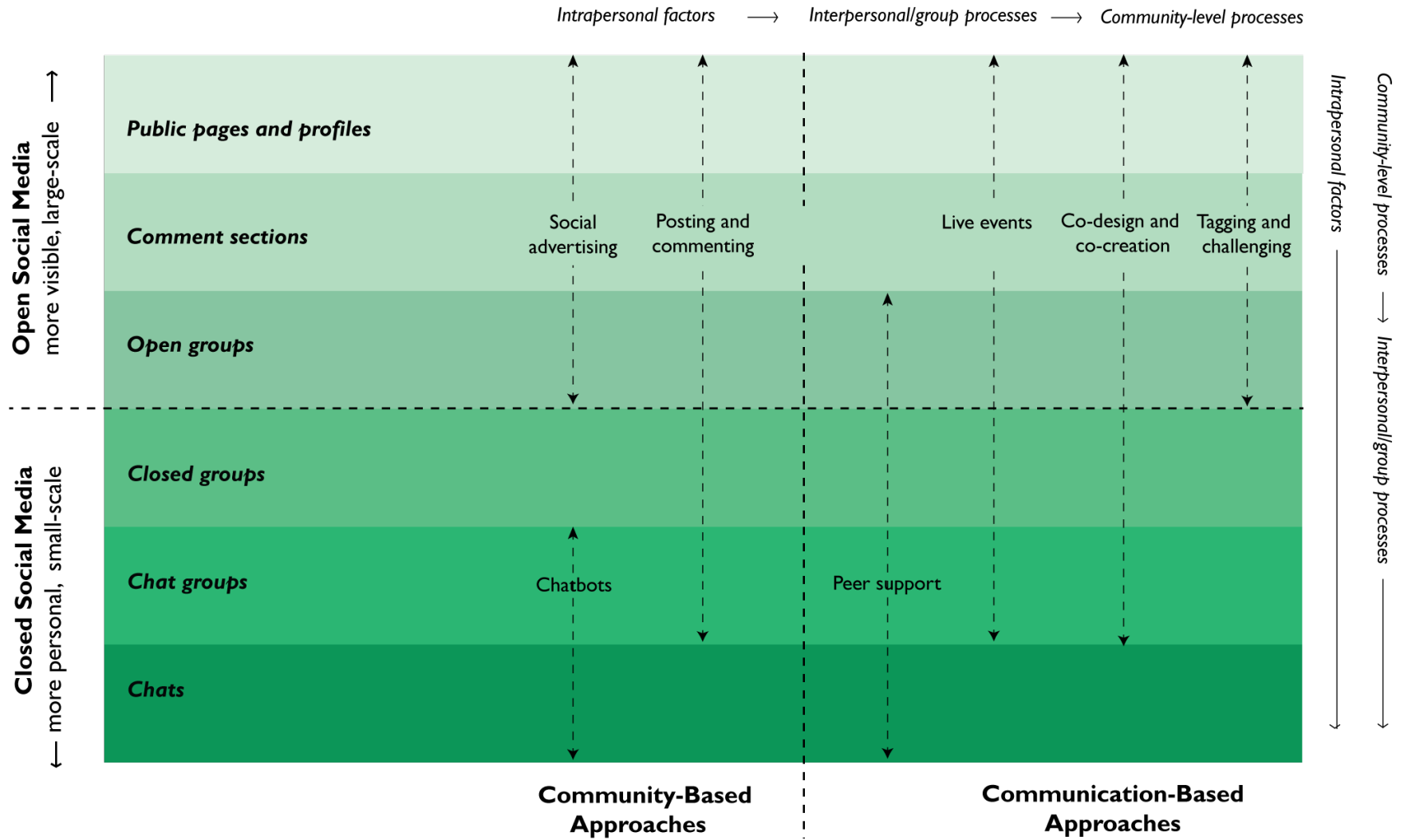
- The communication-based strategies that were employed across the selected interventions seek to influence intrapersonal factors such as knowledge and attitudes, for example by providing information about the public support or use of contraceptives. This also includes strategies to deliver these messages to larger and/or more specific groups, often employed for those messages to further disseminated through reinforcement or other processes offered by social media platforms (e.g.: likes, shares, comments,).

- The community-based approaches that were employed across the selected interventions seek to leverage social connectedness of communities by stimulating reflective dialogue, often in collaboration with key stakeholders and influencers. These strategies stimulate the creation and circulation of social proof (mainly descriptive norms) and foster reflective dialogue, reinforcement, and peer support (mainly injunctive norms). Focusing on small and/or local, primarily offline communities as well as larger online communities, these strategies mainly seek to influence interpersonal, group and community-level processes.

It is important to note, however, that interventions to shift norms hardly ever rely on a single approach or strategy; most of the programs selected for this review combined the approaches and strategies outlined below, as is shown through the discussed case studies (i.e.: AI-powered chatbot Big Sis (Girl Effect, n.d.); the SKY Girls movement (Hutchinson et al., 2020); the testimonial video program Merci mon Héros (Global Digital Health Network, 2021; Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, 2020). Within community-based and communication-based approaches – that often overlap – the case studies highlight how the identified strategies contributed to norm-shifting within the interventions.

Box 3. Moving Towards a Typology of Social Media Programming

- *Communication-based approaches* to norms-shifting on social media tailor media content or messages to audiences to shift norms. Often, such interventions are designed to deliver (personalized) normative media content or messages via (1) social media posts on public pages and profiles, often boosted via social advertising, (2) open and closed social media groups, (3) closed chat groups and instant messaging.

- *Community-based approaches* *or* peer-led intervention approaches to norms shifting on social media leverage social capital in (online) communities to shift norms to reach the right audiences. Such interventions are designed to involve and empower target groups to **create** (social media) content and stimulate online engagement in its wake, either through offline trainings and workshops or through online collaborative platforms or social media groups. Community-based intervention approaches inspire audiences to (1) share, post, and comment as well as to (2) tag and/or challenge their peers via their own profile pages, in social media groups, and via chat groups and instant messaging.

Figure 3. Categorization of Tactics used Across Approaches for Norm-Shifting on Social Media

Norms-Shifting Strategies for Communication-Based Approaches

Communication-based norm-shifting interventions (both open and closed) on social media revolve around delivering media content or messages that are attuned to normative perceptions of individual audiences and/or audience groups to shift norms. Such messages can be designed manually, drawing from formative research; or automatically, drawing from data provided by the user via questionnaires, messaging, or user interfaces, which is also referred to as computer-aided message tailoring (Kroeze et al., 2006; Lustria et al., 2009; Peels et al., 2013). Often, such interventions are designed to deliver (personalized) normative media content or messages via (1) social media posts on public pages and profiles, often boosted via social advertising, (2) open and closed social media groups, (3) closed chat groups and instant messaging.

- **Posting** media content on social media to address norms is the most common tactic across the programs selected for this working paper. Following a communication-based approach, posting occurs on public social media pages – on pages that are either owned by the intervention or by social media influencers that program developers collaborate with (e.g.: Bonnevie et al., 2020) – in comment sections, in open and closed groups (e.g.: Watkins et al., 2020) and via apps or instant messaging (e.g.: Flaudias et al., 2015; Kernot et al., 2019). The modality and content formats of social media posts vary: from fact sheet and quotes, to short video stories. Most of the time, social media posts aim to shift norms by affecting the perceived social norms – either directly by providing normative feedback and/or by stimulating engagement with specific social norms to generate social proof (e.g.: Baker et al., 2021; Fze, 2021; Lutkenhaus et al., 2020, 2022).

CASE STUDY
YouTube miniseries MTV Shuga: Alone Together

Highlighted strategy: Posting (weekly video episodes)

MTV Shuga: Alone Together is an educational entertainment miniseries created by the MTV Staying Alive Foundation. With 70 short episodes posted daily on YouTube starting in April 2020, the miniseries aimed to increase young people's knowledge, motivation, and actions to prevent COVID-19 and to shape norms around public health. The episodes follow a group of young people through video chats that show how they cope with the pandemic and where they discuss topics such as vaccine safety and disinformation. The series is aimed at African countries (i.e.: Botswana, Nigeria, South-Africa, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire) the series reached an audience of 7.7 million across continent, with over 1 million unique views of the series' episodes and averaging on 5638 unique views per episode.

Analysis of 3,982 comments and 70 live chat conversations showed how the posting strategy stimulated followers to reinforce the episodes' key messages and complement it with their own views, experiences, and stories. The viewers – predominantly adults under 35 and mostly women – felt compelled to follow the COVID-19 safety measures and used social media to reach out to fellow viewers for advice, solace, support, and resources. The miniseries stimulated people to support and influence each other to shape norms around public health (Baker et al., 2021).

Source: https://www.mtvshuga.com/alonetogether/

- **Social advertising** is a tactic that complemented other strategies to expand reach of the programs selected for this working paper (Sundstrom et al., 2021; Voices4Change, 2017). Social advertising is the option offered by most social media platforms to 'boost' or 'sponsor' posts, targeting specific demographics (e.g.: age, location, gender) and/or interests (e.g.: dance, electronic music, cooking). Social advertising can be used to reach individuals beyond the circle of followers of the page where the media content is posted (for example: reaching 12–18-year-old girls in a specific region that do not follow the local health services on social media). Social advertising can be configured in ways to reach target audiences that meet specific demographic or interest patterns. In norms-shifting interventions, social advertising often plays a supportive role in reaching target groups on open social media. It is often used as a strategy to deliver messages or social proof to specific audience groups, influencing descriptive norms. This means that social advertising cannot be used to influence norms directly but can help to introduce information to a larger group and disseminate through reinforcement and other processes offered by social media platforms.

Case Study
Talking about sexual health and pleasure at scale with Love Matters

Highlighted strategy: Social advertising

Love Matters is a sexual and reproductive health and rights program by RNW Media. The program focuses on youth aged 18-30 across various countries (i.e.: India, Kenya, Egypt, Nigeria, China, Mexico, Burundi, Congo) and builds online communities to facilitate conversations capable of shifting norms around sexual health and sexual pleasure via reflective dialogue.

Love Matters posts messages on their open social media pages that aim to stimulate reflective dialogue. For example, a post asks the question: 'Is it possible for someone to be not interested in sex overall?' To get the conversation going, Love Matters sometimes kickstarts it by using social advertising strategies. Plus, as initial comments can influence the course of the comments that follow, they also use social advertising to initially involve specific target groups that can strike the right chord.

Source: https://www.rnw.org/what-we-do/love-matters/

- **Chatbots:** Message tailoring is a widely used method to increase the relevance of communication programs by adapting messages to the audiences' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes around specific issues. Message tailoring was employed for several decades before social media, using computer-aided personalization of letters, e-mails and websites (Kroeze et al., 2006; Lustria et al., 2009; Peels et al., 2013). In norms-shifting interventions, it has been used to provide personalized normative feedback to to shift perceptions of norms among individuals (Neighbors et al., 2015). Chatbots are a rather new phenomenon in norms-shifting interventions on social media, resembling message tailoring, while using messaging apps as a delivery mechanism and offering a higher degree of interactivity for a conversational experience (e.g.: Girl Effect, 2020; Wang et al., 2022). Messages can be tailored to social

media profiles or offer a tailored conversational experience as users decide the course of conversation by, for example, asking questions or picking themes to discuss at their discretion and timing. The selected case studies show that chatbots can promote information-seeking behaviors, provide support, and reshape gender attitudes of social media users. Furthermore, chatbots offer anonymity and a safe space to talk about topics or ask questions that would otherwise be considered taboo (in most cases, users know they are interacting with non-human actors).

CASE STUDY
AI-powered chatbot 'Big Sis'

Highlighted strategy: Chatbot

'Big Sis' is an AI-powered chatbot where girls can get trusted, non-judgmental advice about sex and relationships in 8 languages. The chatbot provides a trusted environment where girls get questions answered about sexual and reproductive health that they often cannot ask anyone else and is available via WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger.

'Big Sis' is part of the Springster platform, a global mobile brand by Girls Effect that is available to girls in 8 languages and in 15 countries in Africa and Asia (e.g.: South Africa, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Kenya). Besides the chatbot, the platform includes a website and social media pages offering a supportive community where trained moderators - older teenage girls who are also referred to as 'Big Sis' - help to keep the conversation on track. (Girl Effect, n.d., 2020)

Evaluations have shown that girls who chat with Big Sis know more about STIs and contraception and are primed to act upon it. Some of the answers touch upon topics or behaviors that are considered taboo. By providing direct feedback, chatbots such as Big Sis can influence injunctive norms and stimulate information seeking behaviors. Plus, better-informed girls may disseminate their knowledge within the larger Girl-Effect community and beyond.

Source: https://www.global.girleffect.org/what-we-do/mobile-platforms/springster/

Norms-shifting Strategies for Community-Based Approaches

The strategies used in the community-based approaches leverage social connectedness in (online) communities to shift norms and reach target audiences. Such interventions are designed to involve and empower target groups to create (social media) content and are intended to stimulate engagement, either through offline trainings and workshops or through online collaborative platforms or social media groups. Community-based intervention approaches inspire audiences to (1) share, post, and comment as well as to (2) tag and/or challenge their peers via their own profile pages, in social media groups, and via chat groups and instant messaging. The strategies below are not mutually exclusive and often used in close accordance with each other.

- **Tagging and challenging:** A few of the selected interventions have programs employ strategies that involve and activate online communities directly, aiming to stimulate processes that result in new media content (influencing descriptive norms) and reinforcement of content (influencing injunctive norms). Furthermore, by tagging and challenging, participants invite their social connections to participate too. In the selected interventions, many content formats have been applied, for example: sharing quizzes and puzzles (e.g.: multiple choice questions, word finders),

sharing stories or statements and asking questions (e.g.: asking audiences for their opinion), tagging others (e.g.: asking to acknowledge important others – loved ones, role models, etc. – by tagging them), making pledges by adopting frames and/or filters (e.g.: adopting a Facebook frame in support of gender equality), and creative challenges (e.g.: poetry challenges, finishing song lyrics, participating in dance challenges) (e.g.: Global Digital Health Network, 2021; Hutchinson et al., 2020; Lutkenhaus et al., 2020, 2022). None the media formats in the tagging and challenging category appears to be a recipe for success, however: a small number of posts resulted in many meaningful responses. Simple, open-ended questions or challenges (e.g.: finishing a poem, adopting a Frame), tapping into current affairs, and referring to popular culture appear to be most successful in terms of stimulating engagement, but do not guarantee success. Whether an individual post is a success depends on many other factors besides a post's format.

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Case Study
Building the SKY Girls movement

Highlighted strategy: Tagging and Challenging

SKY Girls is a multimedia and empowerment program aimed at girls in Botswana, Ghana, Kenya and Côte D'Ivoire designed and implemented by Good Business and Now Available Africa. SKY Girls uses the tagline "Be true to yourself" to build an aspirational environment in which adolescents feel a sense of social identity and social inclusion. This encourages girls to act in ways that are beneficial to their health and well-being.

During school visits, SKY Girls facilitators introduce girls to the principles of the "SKY sistahood," and encourage girls to take a SKY pledge to remain true to themselves. Online, the cast of the SKY Girls movies make the pledges too and call for followers of the page to do the same. New pledges may influence descriptive norms, and challenging other girls to take the pledge too, potentially disseminates social proof via their social connections.

Source: http://www.skygirlsgh.com/

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- **Co-design and co-creation:** Community-based approaches aim to empower offline and online communities to co-design social media campaigns and/or co-create social media content to shift social norms. This often materializes in a corpus of pledges and/or personal stories gathered under a single (co-created) hashtag or slogan (descriptive norms) but may also result in activities to foster supportive online communities (injunctive norms). The point of departure for most interventions selected for this working paper are offline communities reached through schools, organizations or public events that are invited for trainings and workshops to produce the anticipated media content (e.g.: Hutchinson et al., 2020; Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, 2020). Participants can be asked to co-design social media campaigns (e.g.: Fisser, 2013) and/or co-create social media varying from single videos, photos or texts (e.g.: Carrillo et al., 2018; Evans et al., 2020; Global Digital Health Network, 2021; Hutchinson et al., 2020; Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, 2020; van den Heerik et al., 2017); to fully-fledged video clips to miniseries (e.g.: Davies et al., 2020). Often, the media content is posted on the social media feed of

the individual participant and/or shared via the social media page of the associated program, allowing it to spread via social ties. In some cases, participants are asked to share their social media content on social media groups (open and closed), groups chats or individual chats.

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Case Study
Testimonial videos of Merci Mon Héros

Highlighted strategy: Co-Design and Co-Creation

Merci Mon Héros (meaning 'thank you, my hero') is a program in francophone Africa that spurred from a youth design challenge and was further developed under the guidance of Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs and Breakthrough Action and Research. At the heart of the program is the idea of leveraging testimonial videos on social media, showcasing positive examples and modeling positive behaviors to reduce the impact of norms that prevent youth from accessing family planning and reproductive health information and services.

The program aims to reach and involve young people, but also adults such as parents, teachers, religious leaders, and other gatekeepers. In testimonial videos, both groups share stories taken from real-life (e.g.: a young woman talking about her unplanned pregnancy), often thanking an adult that was there for them. In doing so, the program sheds a positive light on people that played a role in breaking barriers and taboos around sexual and reproductive health and who model positive behaviors (Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, 2020).

The stories in Merci Mon Héros are often drawn from community events, where the team can find other young people to share their stories, editing it into sharable format. In addition to the testimonial videos on social media, the program includes other components such as community events (off- as well as online), informative and engaging posts on social media pages and - although limited - mass media (radio and TV).

Source: https://breakthroughactionandresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/BR_WABAoverall_ActivityBrief.pdf

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- **Peer Support:** A few of the programs selected for this working paper have contacted existing social media groups or chat groups – or have set-up new groups - to foster a supportive community that provides peer support and shifts norms by sharing personal stories (e.g.: Aizenkot & Kashy-Rosenbaum, 2018; Robinson et al., 2019). Such groups require moderation, but as engagement stays within a closed community of likeminded individuals, it is often much more personal and/or personally relevant than engagement within communities on open social media.

- **Live events** are the online equivalent of offline community events and often complement a wider range of activities in community-based intervention approaches. Live events can take place on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram and often aim to shift norms by facilitating a *reflective dialogue* by influential social media users or stakeholders in the wider program. Furthermore, in open social media spaces, live events are highly prolific happenings that boost the online presence of programs, making other components of programs visible to others. In closed social media spaces, live events often address personal stories and taboos and are more focused on strengthening the community from within (Girl Effect, n.d., 2020).

Discussion

To date, SBC programs have approached norms-shifting on social media in various ways. This working paper suggests that there is no single 'winning formula': the activity of norms-shifting is context-dependent and needs to be carefully attuned to the target issue and audience while also considering the broader environment for shifting norms online and offline. This working paper provides an overview of the most used strategies to leverage social media for norms-shifting. We provide a framework for distinguishing between *communication-based* and *community-based* intervention approaches and at various levels of visibility on social media. We have reviewed how these strategies are thought to influence behaviors through addressing types of norms, and how so. The working paper provides a typology, identifies an evidence gap in terms of the implied change mechanisms and effectiveness of the various strategies, and represents a first step towards building evidence of what's working to shift norms online.

Fluidity and Scalability

In the programs selected for this working paper, we distinguished two ways in which norm-shifting on social media has been approached: 1) *communication-based* intervention approaches aim to deliver normative communication that is attuned to target audiences to affect norms and use social media features such as posting and commenting, social advertising, and chatbots to reach target audiences; and 2) *community-based* interventions aim to leverage social capital in (online) communities to reach audiences and shift norms, using strategies such as co-designing and co-creating social media content, tagging and challenging, live events and fostering peer support groups. Both intervention approaches leverage features of social media that vary in public visibility. On closed social media, features such as group pages, group chats and

instant messaging provide normative messages and feedback that are highly personally relevant and/or often on issues that are considered too taboo or controversial to discuss openly. On open social media, media content and comments posted on public pages, profiles and groups often address norms at the community-level by making pledges, building social proofs, and breaking taboos.

Although the proposed typology distinguishes two main domains of strategies and tactics, the ways in which these are implemented vary across the norm-shifting interventions selected for this working paper. For example, the selected interventions include small, local programs based on local real-life groups on the one hand; and large-scale interventions that primarily aim to build large communities around key themes using world-wide social media platforms (e.g.: Love Matters, RNW Media, n.d.). Most of the norm-shifting interventions selected for this paper, however, combine various communication-based and community-based tactics targeting the intrapersonal, interpersonal/group and community-level. These interventions rarely focus on social media alone, but acknowledge social media as one of the multiple environments where target audiences can be influenced by peers and where norms can thus be shifted. Communication-based approaches and community-based approaches are therefore not mutually exclusive; in fact, they are fluid and can be configured to reinforce each other.

To shift norms via social media, it is therefore important to distinguish what communities are – offline and online. On the ground, communities are groups of people that often live in the same area, go to the same school, or have similar circumstances that tie them together. Online, communities can be groups – small and large – that (temporarily) gather around interests or opinions they have in common; a process that is often affected by algorithmic recommender patterns steering similar people to similar places. Furthermore, how people are connected offline, often resonates in which communities people navigate on social media. Individuals that belong to the same offline community are likely to be connected online (Reich et al., 2012), yet they may also be members of various online communities that are disconnected from the offline ones. This implies that to successfully shift norms using social media, it is important to acknowledge the role social media plays in the larger environment of community members. Following a socio-ecological approach, interventions need to be mapped along social media patterns in a way that is similar to other (offline) environments. Program developers need a good understanding of the role that social media plays in the daily lives of target audiences, which social media behaviors they have in common, and the issues that interventions aim to address. In the selected literature, most of the programs start at the local level: often a school classes or groups of citizens from a certain area and layer norm-shifting activities on social media from there. Larger programs that aim to build or engage with communities on a national or global level often need communication-based approaches to reach audiences to build and engage with a community. Various programs selected for this working paper have employed digital research methods to tailor norm-shifting

approaches on social media to the online behaviors of their target audiences (see **Box 4**).

Box 4. Digital methods to monitor and assess norm-shifting on social media

Network analysis (Formative research)
Analysis of how media content and/or social media users are connected can help program developers identify their audience segments and potential social media influencers. By focusing on group/community patterns rather than the behavior of individuals, privacy can be granted.

Text analysis (Formative research, adaptive management, evaluation)
Analysis of aggregated text using techniques such as word cloud, bigrams and semantic networks can help program developers to better understand how key issues are perceived and discussed, either as formative research or as research to inform adaptive management. Analyzing how audiences use emojis in their messages and responses can deliver similar results. Aggregated text can be analyzed by a community (see network analysis) to get a better sense of how various communities engage with an issue.

Image mining (Formative research, adaptive management, evaluation)
Using machine learning techniques to automatically classify images, may help program developers how audience segments engage with key issues beyond text.

Digital ethnography (Formative research)
Ethnographic research in online communities can help program developers to better understand how key issues are perceived and discussed.

Stimulating Engagement

In norms-shifting on social media, a key factor seems to be that individuals are more likely to change their normative perceptions if they see the actual behavior occurring on the feeds of multiple peers in a close social network (Shane-Simpson et al., 2017). Stimulating engagement on personal timelines and in comments sections – either following a *communication-based* or a *community-based* approach and using various tactics and strategies – is an effective way to generate such social proof. Depth of engagement varies across the various tactics and strategies mapped out in the typology. For example, in communication-based strategies, engagement often takes the shape of chatting with a moderator or chat bot, whereas community-based interventions often use trained the moderators and work with ambassadors that are part of the audience segments that the program aims to reach and are therefore culturally fluent. Various interventions selected for this paper trained their moderators to engage participants, manage the dynamics and ensure safety.

A drawback of stimulating engagement is that program developers have limited control over the kind of engagement that is stimulated and the course it takes. During the consultation event, various practitioners and researchers reported cases where audiences did not respond positively to normative messages. Also, cases were mentioned where a few social media users responded intensely and aggressively, attracting more

of such comments, while scaring away social media users that would agree with the original message. To prevent this from happening, it appears to be important that the portrayed norm is not too far from what the actual norm is among specific audience segments, which again emphasizes the importance of formative research. For example, after identifying a gap between what young girls thought the norm was (carrying condoms is 'slutty') and what the norm actually was (carrying condoms is smart), the AIDS/STD Foundation in the Netherlands successfully stimulated engagement using influencer videos and YouTube comments to shift normative perceptions (Fisser, 2016).

Furthermore, it is essential that normative messages reach the right audience segments. On social media, where algorithms tailor the contents of timelines, this is tricky: algorithms that seem to amplify negative engagement with normative messages among the peers of the negative responders, reaching audiences that are likely to have a similarly negative stance toward that norm as groups of closely connected social media users are often characterized by like-mindedness. At the same time, this also works the other way around: positive engagement with normative messages is amplified among groups that are likely to have a positive stance toward that norm. For a large part, the initial responses normative messages receive on social media seem to influence the course of subsequent engagement. Various programs have therefore used social advertising to reach the right target audience, kickstarting engagement in desired way and attracting similar engagement organically (e.g.: RNW Media, n.d.).

Gatekeepers and Power Holders

Just like in offline communities, online communities include gatekeepers and power holders. Research suggests that program developers can collaborate with social media influencers in order to effectively reach and engage with specific audience segments (Lutkenhaus et al., 2019). In the programs selected for this working paper, a few programs collaborated with influencers in online communities (e.g.: Bonnevie et al., 2020; Fisser, 2016; Population Foundation of India, n.d.-a; RNW Media, n.d.), while others – mostly small-scale and/or community-based programs – identified the most influential members of offline communities and trained them to share norm-shifting social media content (e.g.: Carrillo et al., 2018; Evans et al., 2020; Global Digital Health Network, 2021; Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, 2020; van den Heerik et al., 2017; Van Woudenberg et al., 2020). It appears that it is all about involving the power holders in the (social media) environment to build social proof and/or reinforcement, which may hold parallel to engaging such groups offline in norms-shifting efforts.

The availability of social media data offers the opportunity to leverage social listening to assess norms and monitor norm shifting on social media. More specifically, various digital tools and methods can be applied to conduct *formative research*, *adaptive research* and *evaluation research* to better understand interests,

opinions, questions and reigning norms among online communities before, during and after the implementation of norm-shifting interventions on social media (Iskarpatyoti et al., 2017; Kaltura, 2020; Lutkenhaus, 2020; Lutkenhaus et al., 2019, 2022; Raftree, 2019; Sánchez-Páramo & Legovini, 2021; World Bank, 2019). This is also shown in a few of the programs selected for this working paper (see **Box 4**) (i.e.: Global Digital Health Network, 2021; Lutkenhaus et al., 2020, 2022). Privacy does not have to be an issue as analyzing publicly available social media data on an aggregated level safeguards data privacy: aggregated methods focus on group patterns rather than individuals. (Diepeveen, 2022; Lutkenhaus, 2020; Raftree, 2019).

Ethical issues arise from privacy and ownership of user-generated media content, access to social media technologies, and unintended consequences of amplification, i.e.: when a testimonial video goes viral and results in negative backlash for the user featured in the content. Especially in LMICs, access to social media technology is not a given for all audiences, particularly younger ones. There are also (media) literacy and age-related sensitivities: children and low literate may post without realizing the myriad ways in which their information could be used, even though it is in the platforms' terms and conditions. Emerging legislation in the area of data privacy, security and limits to digital profiling aim to protect such audiences but may affect communication-based approaches in that there are likely to be limits to the extent of personalization of media content and targeted advertising – especially for minors (Council of the European Union, 2022; Raftree, 2019).

Recommendations & Conclusions

In most cases, norms-shifting through social media interventions are implemented within larger and multi-layered SBC programs and/or are part of transmedia strategies. Most of the programs selected for this working paper include elements of *community-based* and *communication-based* approaches and leverage various social media features working in accordance with other program elements to not only shift norms, but also address knowledge, attitudes as well as to improve access to services (i.e.: Girl Effect, n.d.; Global Digital Health Network, 2021; Hutchinson et al., 2019, 2020; Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, 2020; Lutkenhaus et al., 2020, 2022; Voices4Change, 2017; Wang et al., 2022). Aligning norms-shifting activities on social media with factors at the individual, family, community and society levels, while also taking the influence of algorithms and other mechanisms of social media platforms into account, is what makes norms-shifting on social media a complex, yet promising addition to the SBC media mix (Hepp, 2019; Kaltura, 2020; Petit & Zalk, 2019; Raftree, 2019; Sánchez-Páramo & Legovini, 2021; Voices4Change, 2017).

Based on our literature review, we see several ways how social media can be leveraged to complement the nine attributes of norms-shifting interventions identified by the Social Norms Learning Collaborative (IRH, 2020):

1. **Using social media to engage with people at multiple levels**

Social media provides extra avenues to engage with (communities of) people. This becomes increasingly important as the 'analogue' daily lives of target groups increasingly intertwine with their digital ones. In SBC interventions, social media platforms can be leveraged to shift descriptive norms (stimulate circulation and creation of social proof) and stimulate reinforcement (injunctive norms) at the community, interpersonal/group and intrapersonal level and reach target groups where they are present

2. **Seeking community-level change on open social media**

Features of social media that are publicly visible can be used to involve audiences in achieving community-level change. This can be achieved using community-based approaches that leverage existing social capital to create online momentum, such as co-designing and co-creating social media content, as well as media content formats that invite audiences to share, tag or engage in other kinds of behaviors to stimulate reflective dialogue and spread content further.

3. **Using closed social media to create safe spaces for critical reflection**

Features of social media that are not publicly visible, such as closed groups, groups chats, or messaging apps can be used to foster peer support and to create safe spaces for critical reflection on interpersonal/group level. Chatbots can stimulate reflection around taboo issues at the intrapersonal level.

4. **Community-based approaches for organized diffusion**

Inviting target groups to engage in sharing, tagging, and challenging each other can catalyze diffusion, especially when community-based approaches are used that leverage existing social capital to create online momentum. Collaborations with influential community members – either community leaders or social media influencers – advance engagement and dissemination, following social ties while spreading across communities.

5. **Rooting the issue within communities' value systems**

Social listening can be utilized as a formative research tool to better understand how issues are represented in the value systems of online communities. Insights can contribute to a better attunement of communication-based approaches to the beliefs of target group. Using such insights to root an issue in communities' value systems may mean the difference between reflective discussion and negative commenting spinning out of control.

6. Social listening to identify misperceptions around harmful behaviors.

Similarly, social listening can also be used to probe the prevalence of misperceptions around key issues and harmful behaviors and can help to address them using community-based as well as communication-based strategies.

7. Confronting power imbalances

Social media strategies can help to address power imbalances that exist on the ground, for example by amplifying messages via social media influencers and/or empowering community members that engage in positive behaviors.

8. Creating positive new norms

The creation of positive new norms can be stimulated using community-based approaches. Communication-based strategies can be used to let new positive norms reach (new) target audiences.

9. Accurately assessing norms

Social listening can be utilized as a research tool to study assess norms with formative research and with monitoring and evaluation. Furthermore, social listening can be leveraged as a tool for adaptive management, following how conversations about key issues evolve and adapting norm-shifting strategies accordingly.

Selected Resources for Further Reading

1. [Digital and Social Media for Social and Behaviour Change Communication](#) (Linda Raftree for iMedia Associates, 2019)

2. [Hidden in plain sight: how social media infrastructure shapes gender norms](#) (Stephanie Diepeveen, 2022)

3. [From browsing to behaviour change: How digital interventions influence offline change among adolescent girls](#) (Christina Shane-Simpson et al, 2017)

4. [Using Social Media Data to Understand Changes in Gender Norms](#) (Brittany Iskarpatyoti, Heather Biehl, and John Spencer, 2018)

5. [Using social media to change norms and behaviors at scale](#) (Carolina Sánchez-Páramo & Arianna Legovini, 2021)

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Annex 1: Categorization of the Included Programs

	Community-based	Both	Communication-based
Open social media	– City Health II (Davies et al., 2020)[$] – Safe Sex (Fisser, 2013)[$] – LifeInLeggings (Sanatan, 2017) – M&M's are like people (Carrillo et al., 2018)[$] – Smoking is sooo... (van den Heerik et al., 2017)[$]	– CyberRwanda[+] (YLabs, n.d.) – Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon[+] (Lutkenhaus et al., 2020, 2022; Population Foundation of India, n.d.-a) – YBMen (Watkins et al., 2020)[$] – Flu Vaccine (Bonnevie et al., 2020)[$]	– Sauti Plus[+] (Reach a Hand, n.d.) – You have options (Sundstrom et al., 2021)[$] – Safe House (Fze, 2021) – MTV Shuga: Alone together[*] (Baker et al., 2021)
Both	– MyMovez (Van Woudenberg et al., 2020)[$] – LTE (Evans et al., 2020)[$] – Love Matters[+%] (RNW Media, n.d.) – Merci Mon Héros[+%] (Global Digital Health Network, 2021; Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs, 2020) – Purpose.com[+]	– Shujaaz[*+] – SKY Girls[*%] (Hutchinson et al., 2020) – Smart Snacking (Sharps et al., 2019)[$] – Girl Effect (Girl Effect, 2020)[+] – Voices4Change (Denny et al., 2017; Voices4Change, 2017) [+]	– AMAZE[+] (Amaze.org, 2022) – Alcohol abuse (Flaudias et al., 2015)[$]
Closed social media	– Breastfeeding support (Robinson et al., 2019)[$] – Cyberbullying (Aizenkot & Kashy-Rosenbaum, 2018)[$]		– Mums step it up (Kernot et al., 2019)[$] – Alcohol abuse (Ridout & Campbell, 2014)[$] – SnehAI (Population Foundation of India, n.d.-b; Wang et al., 2022) – Big Sis (Girl Effect, n.d.)[+]

[*] **From academic literature (LMIC)**
[+] **From grey literature**
[$] **From academic literature (non-LMIC)**
[%] **Interviewed**