



**Showroom**



**News and negativity**



## Training suggestions



## Learning outcomes

At the end of this chapter, participants...

- ...can discuss reasons behind the crisis in traditional journalism
- ...can discuss the phenomenon of negative news framing and possible reasons for it
- ...can list impacts of negative framing
- ...can discuss the phenomenon of news avoidance and its possible causes and consequences
- ...can describe the phenomenon of negativity bias and how the brain processes the news.
- ...can recognize gaps that often exist in people's perception of the world and the reality
- ...can list several impacts that conflict-focused journalism can have on individuals and societies.
- ... can discuss how a negative news perspective can impact their own communities/ countries.



## Training schedule

Buzz groups, presentation, discussion / 1 hour

### **The current state of journalism**

Trainees analyze and discuss the disruptive changes that media and traditional journalism in their countries and regions are facing and how media industry and professionals are coping with these challenges.

Group work, presentation and discussion / 1 hour

### **Negativity in news (fundamental)**

Trainees reflect on how news overemphasize on the negative in images and headlines and discuss the effects on individuals.

Quiz, presentation and discussion / 1 hour

### **Misconceptions of the world**

Trainees test their knowledge about Sustainable Development Goals achievements and reflect on how accurately they know the state of development of the world? They understand what biases are influencing our perception of reality.

Buzz groups, presentation and discussion / 1 hour

### **Consequences of negativity for societies and democracy, what the public wants (fundamental)**

Trainees reflect on the consequences of the media's focus on the nasty and negative for their societies and also for political stability and democracy. Trainees discuss studies on what audiences want from the media.



## **Requirements**

### **Technology**

Internet

Face-to-face: laptop, boxes, projector / video screen (trainer), laptop, smartphones (trainees)

Online: laptops and smartphones (trainer + trainees), headsets

### **Materials (face-to-face)**

Board/whiteboard, flipchart stand and paper, cards (if available), markers.

### **Tools (online)**

Video conference: Zoom (Back up: WhatsApp)

Visualization: Miroboard, JamBoard (Zoom offers digital whiteboards as well)

Quizzes: Slido, Mentimeter

Communication: WhatsApp, Email

Documentation, shared documents: Google Drive folder



## **Session Details**

## • The current state of journalism

### **Objectives**

Discussing the local/national media situation, considering positive and negative aspects; analyzing/comparing media landscapes; exchanging opinions

### **Duration**

Buzz groups/discussion in plenary: 40 minutes

Presentation/discussion: 20 minutes

### **Preparation**

Prepare (digital) whiteboards or flipchart paper.



### **40 Min., Buzz groups / Discussion**

Divide participants into two or three groups and ask them to discuss the state of the news media in their country. They can offer both criticism and praise. Write key words on cards or on the flip chart paper/digital whiteboard. Some possible questions to consider:

- Does the news media in their countries or regions do a good job holding up a mirror to society?
- What does the news media do well?
- How does it need to improve?
- What are the biggest challenges news organizations are facing?
- How does reading the news make them feel?
- How does the public feel about the news media?

After 10 minutes of group discussion, ask each group to share its findings. Then discuss and contrast and compare how the groups' opinions differ or are similar.

If the workshop participants are from different countries, an option is to divide them into country groups.



### **20 Min., Input / discussion**

#### **PPT Media in crisis**

**Presentation:** PPT News and negativity, slides 2-5

- **Negativity in news**

**Objectives**

Discuss the effects of negative images or headlines. Trainees understand and critically reflect on how the media shape our image of the world and emphasize on the negative side. Option: Find a picture/.gif that summarizes your relationship to news currently and explain your choice.

**Duration**

Group work: 20 min. if examples provided by trainer; 30 min. if participants collect them themselves

Presentation/discussion: 20 min.

**Preparation**

Find and print or save on computer several examples of shocking/negative headlines and images

**30 Min., Discussion**

If working with a less experienced group, show participants several examples of negative headlines or pictures. Brainstorm with them the effects of these headlines and why the editors might have chosen to present the stories this way. Discuss how this language or these images might affect audiences. Ask if they see other ways this information might have been presented? Would it have made a difference in the story or its impact? Put keywords on flipchart or digital whiteboard.

If working with a more experienced group with internet access, ask them to find several examples of negative headlines or pictures themselves. Ask each to present one or two examples and discuss as described above. Put keywords on flipchart or digital whiteboard.

**30 Min., Input / discussion****PPT: Negativity in news**

**Presentation:** PPT News and negativity, slides 6-8

- **Misconceptions of the world**

**Objectives**

Help trainees become aware of their own misconceptions and the reasons behind them. Explain how news is processed in our brains and what evolutionary biases influence our understanding of reported facts. Make them understand the psychological effects that too much negativity has on the audiences' mind and health.

**Duration**

Quiz: 20-30 minutes

Presentation/discussion: 30 minutes

**Preparation**

Choose 3-5 multiple-choice questions from the Gapminder Foundation's Worldview upgrader on UN goals <https://upgrader.gapminder.org/>. Note the percentages of right and wrong answering for the chosen questions provided by the website. Download background explanations on wrong answering for each question.

Offline: Write questions and optional answers on flipchart paper, cover the flipcharts before starting the session.

Online: Enter the questions and optional answers into a digital quiz tool (such as Slido/Multimeter/Kahoot). Note: Quiz tools sometimes limit the number of questions in the free versions.

**Technology**

online: quiz tool (e.g. Sli.do <https://www.sli.do/features-live-quizzes>)

**30 Min., Quiz, discussion of results in entire group**

*Offline:* You can choose whether to let trainees do the quiz individually or in small groups. Show them one multiple-choice question (on flipchart) at a time while hiding the others. Then count the votes per suggested answer and write the results down on the flipchart.

*Online:* Share the entry code of the quiz tool in the chat and give participants time to open the tool. Then activate the first question and give participants time to answer. Then activate the next question. The tool offers you a visualization of the results for each question that you can show the trainees by sharing your screen.

You can then compare the results of the group with those collected by Gapminder Foundation from thousands of people. The background information about the reasons for misconceptions offers ideas for further discussion.

**30 minutes / Input, Q & A and discussion****PPT: News processing and biases / Our perception of the world**

**Presentation:** PPT News and negativity, slides 9-15, 20-24

Show the slides and give examples for the presented biases: negativity bias, availability bias, confirmation bias. Invite trainees to search for other examples and discuss the psychological effects on individuals.

- **Consequences of negativity on societies and democracy, what audiences want**

**Objectives**

Trainees discuss the consequences of too much negativity for societies and democracy. They are familiar with recent surveys about what the audiences expect from the media, especially younger audiences.

**Duration**

Group work: 30 minutes

Presentation/discussion: 20 minutes

**Preparation**

Offline: Write down task description on a flip chart. Prepare a flipchart with two columns for each group: effects on societies, effects on democracy.

Online: Write task description in the chat - or even better: in a common social media group (Once the trainees are in breakout sessions, they have no more access to the chat of the main virtual training room.). Prepare frames on a digital whiteboard

**30 min., group work/ presentation in plenary**

Task: What are the consequences of too much negativity on societies and democracy? Collect ideas on paper/digital whiteboard. Divide the trainees' group in two or three working groups/ create break out rooms. Option for two groups: One group discusses effects on societies, the other on democracy. Give them 20 minutes of time for brainstorming in groups. Each group should select one member to present the results of their brainstorming in plenary. Each group pins or tapes its posters to the wall/digital whiteboard and shares it in plenary. After each presentation, ask the other groups to comment on the ideas.

**30 min., Input, Q&A and discussion**

**PPT: Effects of so much negativity on individuals and societies / What do audiences want**

**Presentation:** PPT News and negativity, slides 16-19, 25-27, 28-37

Present the most recent results of audience surveys (Reuters, BBC, DW, Vogue) which show that audiences want a solution focus, want to be empowered and inspired.