



Discovering better ways  
to solve social problems

# Evaluating Digital and Social Media Strategies to Advance Policy Advocacy and Policy Change

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*Think Tank Session Prepared for:*



Annual Conference – Denver, CO  
October 17, 2014

## Quick Session Poll

- How many of you have been involved with evaluations of programs, projects, or organizations with policy advocacy or policy change goals?
- How many of you have been involved with evaluations of digital and social media strategies?
- How many of you have participated in evaluations at the intersection of these two areas?

## Session Schedule

- 1** Introduce the topic
- 2** Share an example from our work
- 3** Break up into small groups and discuss
- 4** Share insights with the larger group

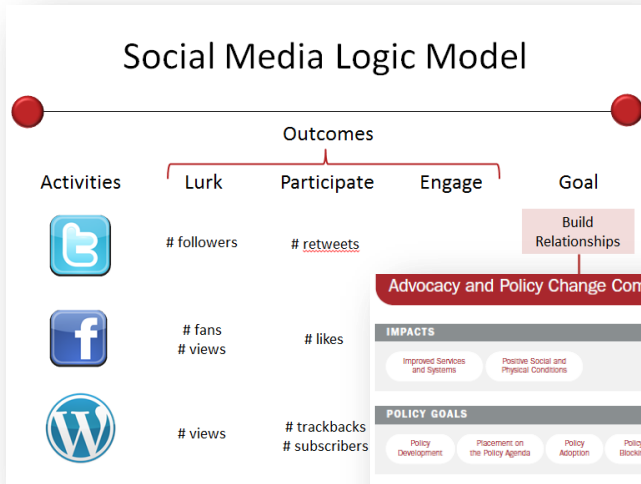
# Foundations and Non-Profits Are Increasingly Making Use of Digital and Social Media Strategies to Advance Policy Related Goals

The Intersection Between  
Online and Offline Engagement

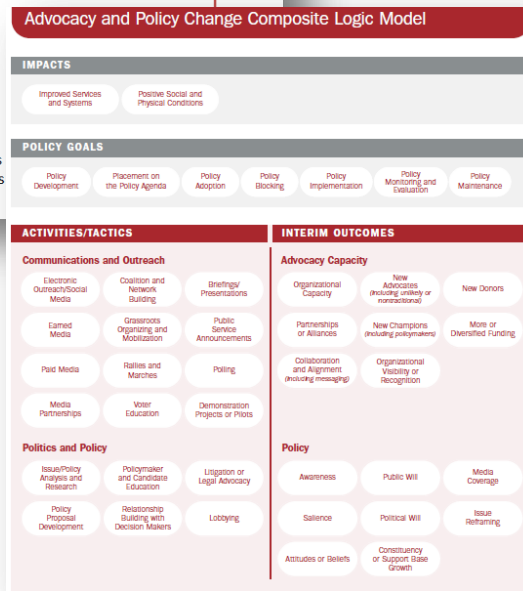


***What are some examples of the strategies and goals you've encountered in your own work?***

# The Bodies of Work Around Evaluating Digital and Social Media and Advocacy/Policy Change Have Grown Significantly, But Questions Remain



AEA 2011: Evaluating Websites and Social Media.  
Stephanie Evergreen.



How do you effectively combine online analytic tools and traditional evaluation methods to measure *both* the **online** and **offline impact** of digital and social media strategies?



A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning. The Harvard Family Research Project, 2009.

A host of resources on Evaluating D/SM and Advocacy:

AEA 365 Blog: Resources for Evaluating Social Media

<http://www.innonet.org/resources/search/results?mode=browse&category=47>

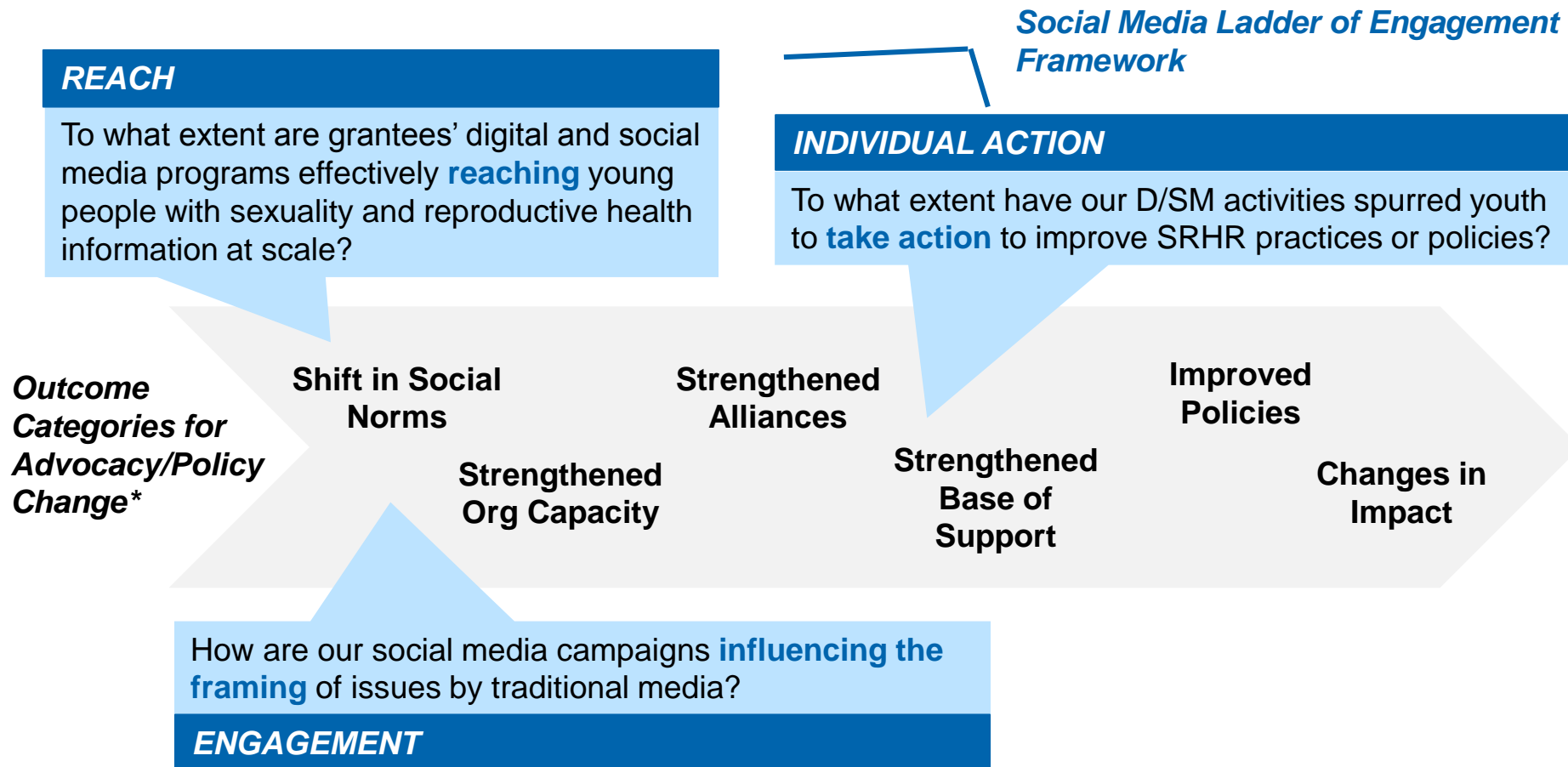
## How Did FSG Get Involved With This Topic?



FORDFOUNDATION

- Collaborated with program officers on the development of a strategic evaluation framework for the Ford Foundation's [Youth Sexuality, Reproductive Health, and Rights Initiative](#)
- The evaluation framework included 4 key components to help program staff and grantees better understand the progress and outcomes of the Youth SRHR Initiative:
  - [Theory of change](#)
  - [Outcomes maps and indicators](#)
  - [Strategic learning questions](#)
  - [Evaluation tools, methods, and learning processes](#)
- A central component of the Initiative is using [strategic communications](#) and [digital and social media](#), as primary tools to change norms, shift the public narrative, and advance policy around youth sexuality, reproductive health and rights

# We Drew From Existing Frameworks to Articulate Key Outcomes and Learning Questions for the Initiative



**GREAT RESOURCE:** [\\*A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy. Prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation by Organizational Research Services. 2007.](#)

### Example Strategic Learning Question

## How is grantees' use of D/SM creating a broader network of youth leaders and advocates that are mobilizing in support of priority youth SRHR issues?

### Prioritized Outcomes

1. Increased number of youth post and share original content on digital/social media platforms to advance priority SRHR issues among target influentials

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2. Youth play a more visible role in advancing priority SRHR issues
  - a) Youth create and disseminate online content in support of priority SRHR issues
  - b) Youth are recognized and respected by other advocates

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3. Strengthened network of youth activists
  - a) Willingness of youth to take action on SRHR priority issues
  - b) Youth coordinating, sharing, and cooperating to advance a campaign or support priority SRHR issues

### Potential Data Collection Methods & Sources

- Online analytics reported via:
  - Individual grantee reporting
  - Analytics reports from third party
- Grantee Reporting

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- Grantee check-in conversations and observation
- Learning conversations with youth mobilization grantees
- (Deeper dive) Interviews with strategic allies
- Grantee Reporting

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- Grantee check-in conversation and observation
- Learning conversations with youth mobilization grantees
- (Deeper dive) Interviews with youth leaders and advocates
- (Deeper dive) Social network analysis of youth advocates



# In Addition to Collecting a Set of Online Analytics, We Recommended Adding Grant Report Questions on the Role of D/SM in Advancing Grantee Goals

**THE FORD FOUNDATION**  
**Youth Sexuality, Reproductive Health and Rights**  
**Grant Reporting Instructions**

Grantee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grant Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Reporting Period: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

**Activities/Issues Addressed**

1. Which of the following approaches have you used primarily in your work around youth sexuality, reproductive health and rights (SRHR)? *Select all that apply.*

- Strategic communications / digital and social media
- SRHR information and awareness
- Youth mobilization
- Policy advocacy

2. *Please describe your organizations activities toward the issues addressed in your grant proposal.*

**Project Outcomes**

3. Which of the following outcomes is your grant working to achieve? *Select all that apply.*

- a) Increased number of youth receive comprehensive sexuality education information through digital and social media platforms
- b) Increased level of youth engagement with sexuality and reproductive health information through digital and social media
- c) Increased number of youth post and share original content on digital/social media platforms to advance priority SRHR issues among target ~~influentials~~ **influentials**
- d) Increased base of support, particularly among youth, for federal and state programs and policies addressing priority SRHR issues
- e) Increased use of positive/supportive frames in our organizations' SRHR communications
- f) Greater number of youth take actions to support progressive SRHR policies and programs

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

**Q: In what ways have you seen youth engagement with sexuality and reproductive health information increase? (select all that apply):**

- Youth are spending more time on our organization's website
  - Youth are creating and posting more original content on our digital and social media platforms
  - Youth are sharing more content via our digital and social media platforms (e.g. retweets, likes, sharing links, etc.)
  - Youth are attending more offline meetings/events
  - Other (please describe):
- 

**Q: Please provide a story about your most successful online campaign in which youth posted and/or shared original content on digital/social media platforms to advance priority SRHR issues among target influencers. What was it about the campaign that made it so successful?**

## ***Small Group Discussion***

Take **2 minutes** and think of an evaluation or learning question from your own work related to the use of digital/social media for policy advocacy or policy change goals.

### ***Stuck? Try these as thoughtstarters:***

- How are youth using the information that they find on our website?
- How are our digital communications activities influencing the framing of issues by traditional media?
- To what extent have our digital/social media activities spurred youth to take action to improve SRHR practices or policies?

### **Discussion Questions**

- What approach(es) might you take/have you taken to answering this question? What methods would you/have you used?
- What are the key outcomes that you would like to collect data on to answer this question?
- What tools (online or offline) have been most useful? Less useful?
- If you've tackled this question in your work before, what were some of the lessons learned? What would you have done differently?

**We want to hear from you!**



## Thank You!

For further information, please contact:



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