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ASEAN GUIDELINE ON MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION IN COMBATING FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION IN THE MEDIA



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Guideline on Management of Government
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FOREWORD BY

Fake news and disinformation have become a major issue not only in ASEAN Member States (AMS) but also as a world global issue. The internet speed and the penetration of information technology that hold positive benefits, may in turn become counterproductive when they are being misused as a tool to spread a hoax, disinformation, and fake news. Through various strategies, the AMS have agreed to continue to educate the public with digital literacy. Since 2017, efforts to address fake news and misinformation have figured significantly in ASEAN's activities. In 2017, the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) convened a Roundtable Discussion on Fake News and Communicating the Right Information and have since adopted the Framework and Joint Declaration to Minimize the Harmful Effects of Fake News in 2018.

In particular, one key challenge is the use of social media as a platform for the promulgation of fake news. As social media platforms seek to command the attention of users for monetary benefit, they may inadvertently facilitate fake news transmission. Meanwhile, Government information that is managed properly and accordingly is believed to serve as one of the solutions to counter and deal with disinformation and fake news circulating within the community. This issue is crucial since information on government programs and policies is frequently targeted or twisted.

As the ASEAN Cooperation Project endorsed by the 56th Meeting of ASEAN the Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) in October 2022, "The Development of the Guideline on Management of Government Information in Combatting Fake News and Disinformation in The Media" (Guideline) is to help realize credible and adaptive management of government information in AMS, especially in dealing with fake news and disinformation in the media. The Guideline project is implemented by the Ministry of Communications and Informatics of the Republic of Indonesia, under the purview ASEAN Senior Official Meeting Responsible for Information (SOMRI) Working Group on Information, Media, and Training (WG-IMT), and supported by the ASEAN COCI Sub-Committee on Information (COCI-SCI) Program. The guideline was improved on The Workshop of ASEAN in Developing the Guideline in Combating Fake News and Disinformation in the Media in March 2023.

Many appreciations for 10 AMS that have been incorporated to finalize the Guideline on Management of Government Information in Combatting Fake News and Disinformation in the Media. The guideline become the legal document after being presented and endorsed at the SOMRI/AMRI meetings in 2023..

Directorate General of Public Information and Communication,
Ministry of Communication and Informatics Republic of Indonesia

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The guideline was supported by various legal resources from ten ASEAN Member States (AMS). AMS provided an insightful general explanation and interesting discourses of case studies.

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ABBREVIATION

TAMS	ASEAN Member States
API	Application Programming Interface
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CG	Curriculum Guide
CMA	Communication and Multimedia Act
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
FICA	Foreign Interference (Countermeasures) Act
GLC	Government-Linked Companies
GILC	Government-Linked Investment Companies
HIC	Hostile Information Campaign
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFCN	International Fact-Checking Network
IPRD	Information and Public Relations Department
IPS	Institute of Policy Studies
IM	Instruction Manual
MCMC	Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission
MIC	Ministry of Information and Communication
MIL	Media and Information Literacy
MIV	Malaysia ICT Volunteer
NCSC	National Cyber Security Center
NLB	National Library Board
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNT	National News Bureau of Thailand
OPS	Office of the Press Secretary
PCO	Presidential Communication Office
PDPA	Personal Data Protection Act
POFMA	Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulations Act
PRD	Public Relations Department
PSGA	Public Sector (Governance) Act
PSDSRC	Public Sector Data Security Review Committee
SURE	Source, Understand, Research, Evaluate
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



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OF GOVERNMENT
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IN THE MEDIA**

INTRODUCTIONS

Fake news and disinformation are emerging challenges. The ASEAN community is not immune to the challenges. Regarding the ASEAN ecosystem, ASEAN Member States (AMS) are aware of and agree to declare and develop guideline together to prevent fake news and disinformation. The guideline was about managing government information from government perspective to combat fake news and disinformation in the media. The guideline was developed based on:

- ① The ASEAN Declaration and Framework for Minimizing the Harmful Effect of Fake News

- ② Core Values on Digital Literacy for ASEAN

- ③ The Declaration on Social Responsible Media for a Peaceful and Prosperous ASEAN Community

- ④ The Joint Statement of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information to Minimize the Negative Effects of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

- ⑤ The 1st Meeting of the ASEAN Task Force on Anti-Fake News.

- ⑥ The Workshop of ASEAN in Developing the Guideline in Combating Fake News and Disinformation in the Media

THE OBJECTIVE AND THE PURPOSE OF GUIDELINE

The objective of the guideline in combating fake news and disinformation in the media:

- ① To provide a framework for government information officers in collaboration with media organizations, journalists, and other stakeholders to identify and prevent the spread of false information. These guidelines typically aim to promote ethical journalism practices, fact-checking, and transparency in reporting.

- ② To ensure that accurate and reliable information is disseminated to the public. This is particularly important in the context of rapidly evolving news cycles and the proliferation of social media platforms, which can enable the rapid spread of false information.

- ③ To establish common standards and best practices that are recognized by media organizations and other stakeholders. The guideline could provide the way of verifying sources, distinguishing between fact and opinion, avoiding sensationalism, and reporting on controversial issues in a balanced and fair manner.

- ④ To build trust between government and the public that mediated through media organization. By following established guidelines, media organizations can demonstrate their commitment to ethical and responsible journalism, which can help to maintain their credibility and reputation.

The purpose of developing guidelines for government information officers in combating fake news and disinformation in the media is:

- ① To provide a framework for how government agencies can respond to false or misleading information that is being disseminated in the media or on social media platforms.

- ② To promote accurate and reliable information by establishing standards and best practices for government information officers. They typically provide guidance on how to verify sources, how to distinguish between fact and opinion, how to avoid sensationalism, and how to report on controversial issues in a balanced and fair manner.

- ③ To promote accuracy and reliability, guidelines for government information officers also aim to improve transparency and accountability in government communications. By adhering to established guidelines, information officers can demonstrate their commitment to ethical and responsible communication, which can help to maintain the trust of the public.

- ④ To improve coordination and collaboration between government agencies, particularly during times of crisis or emergency. By following established guidelines, information officers can ensure that accurate and consistent information is being disseminated across different government agencies and departments.

- ⑤ To ensure that government communications are transparent and accountable. By following established guidelines, information officers can help to ensure that the public has access to reliable and trustworthy information, which can help to maintain the credibility and reputation of government agencies.

DEFINITION OF FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION

Among ASEAN Member States, there are three types of definitions of fake news:

① Formal policy regulation

Fake news refers to information that is false or misleading, whether wholly or in part, and whether on its own or in the context in which it appears;

② UNESCO reference

The definition of fake news is similar to disinformation which refers to information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country; and

③ Agreement among internal regulators

Agreement among internal regulators. Fake news refers to purposefully crafted, misleading, or totally fabricated information that mimics the source including the form of mainstream or alternative news, created without facts or reliable sources, created to influence public views and opinions or for political motives, created to degrade someone's reputation. Fake news is a term that is associated with hoaxes. The definition of hoax refers to general terms for all falsehood information about events, misleading, harmful, and dangerous contents and messages. Hoax consists of three categories: (a) Misinformation - Incorrect or misleading information. It differs from disinformation, which is deliberately deceptive; (b) Disinformation; and (c) Malinformation - Information that is true and factual, but it is intentionally conveyed in order to inflict actual harm and cause the imminent threat of actual harm on a person, organization or country.

In ASEAN context, the definition of disinformation is based on the agreement among internal regulators. The important keyword of the disinformation definition is 'intention.'

- ① Disinformation is false information that is engineered and deliberately disseminated with a specific intention.

- ② Disinformation criteria consist of false context, imposter content, manipulated and fabricated content, and intentional spreading of false or untrue information for the purposes of interfering with a country's domestic politics.

- ③ Disinformation is intentionally shared misinformation or intended to misrepresent information which can lead others to misunderstand.

- ④ Disinformation is intentionally disseminated in order to delude or deceive people. It is a kind of misinformation that is knowingly (intentionally) spread.

- ⑤ Disinformation is the intention to cause harm or undermine the stability and security of the country, agitate people, and/or cause disturbance among the society.

IMPACT OF FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION FROM GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

Fake news and disinformation in the media could impact the government and the community of ASEAN Member States.

① Government perspective

Fake news and disinformation affect the government's policymaking. At the same time, the government faces unrest in reaction, response, and release of anti-fake news and tackle disinformation to minimize populism, weaken government institutions, mistrust and divide society, public anxiety, public fear, public panic, conflict, and extreme cases such as violence, hack the foundation of safety, security, and justice. The government faces dynamic challenges to promote a more informed, responsible, and peaceful society.

② The community perspective

The community perspective: The community faces increasing disillusionment, hostility, misunderstanding, heightened ethnic and religious tensions, undermining trust and ethics in the media, skeptical of the received information, confusion, unproductive discussion, polarization of political opinion, civil discourse breakdown, the disorder in social security, discrimination, human right violation and harmful to the democratic process.

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH

The guideline focuses on the government perspective in managing government information in combating fake news and disinformation in the media. There are three types of government approaches among ASEAN Member States:

① **Whole-of-government**

Whole-of-government refers to a collaborative approach to government policymaking and service delivery that involves multiple government agencies and departments working together to achieve common goals. The goal of a whole-of-government approach is to improve coordination, increase efficiency, and ensure that government programs and services are responsive to the needs of citizens. Whole-of-government initiatives may involve collaboration across different levels of government (such as federal, state, and local) and across different sectors (such as health, education, and defense). The specific goals and objectives of a whole-of-government approach may vary depending on the context but may include issues in combating fake news and disinformation in the media. Effective whole-of-government approaches require strong leadership, clear communication, and a commitment to collaboration and cooperation. They also require a shared vision and understanding of the goals and objectives of the initiative, as well as a willingness to work together to achieve them.

② **The rationale for a strategic approach to government**

The rationale for a strategic approach to government is to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness of government policies and programs in achieving desired outcomes. A strategic approach to government involves setting clear goals and objectives, identifying the resources and capabilities needed to achieve those goals, and implementing evidence-based policies and programs tailored to the population's specific needs and priorities. Overall, a strategic approach to government can help ensure that government policies and programs are responsive to the needs and priorities of citizens, that they are effective in achieving desired outcomes, and that they are delivered in the most

efficient and accountable way possible especially in combating fake news and disinformation in the media.

③ **Combining both whole-of-government and the rationale for a strategic approach to government**

Combining whole-of-government and a strategic approach to government can help ensure that government policies and programs are developed and implemented in a coordinated and effective manner, with clear goals and objectives, and a focus on achieving desired outcomes. This approach can help ensure that government resources are directed towards the most important priorities, that policies and programs are evidence-based and tailored to the specific needs of the population, and that outcomes are measured and evaluated to ensure ongoing improvement. Combining whole-of-government and a strategic approach to government can help ensure that government policies and programs are effective, efficient, and responsive to the needs and priorities of citizens and that they are delivered in a coordinated and collaborative manner across multiple government agencies and departments.

However, ASEAN Member States (AMS) agree to develop a guiding process to coordinate the handling of fake news, research, and organize the development of Fact-Checking. In addition, AMS will jointly exchange and develop concepts and common understandings of online terms to support the development of policies and laws including carrying out activities to strengthen the capacity of countries to deal with fake news. In order to maintain government stability, the Penta-helix's approach may be applied. The approach, while coordinated by the government, involved different stakeholders from different sectors namely: business organizations (e.g., digital platforms, etc.), media, civil society organizations (e.g., fact-checkers network, digital literacy activists, religious and local figures, etc.), academicians, and government. Each of the stakeholders plays pivotal roles from debunking hoaxes, to amplifying counter-narratives against disinformation.

REGULATIONS ENFORCEMENT IN ASEAN MEMBER STATES

The guideline was intended to assist Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations which have different types of regulations in combating fake news and disinformation in the media. There are four types of AMS standing point about the regulations:

- ① The States that have their own anti fake-news and disinformation regulations independently.

- ② The States which have anti fake-news and disinformation in different regulations vertically and horizontally.

- ③ The States which have anti fake-news and disinformation regulations explicitly and implicitly.

- ④ The States which are still drafting, legalizing, or finalizing anti fake-news and disinformation regulations at higher or lower levels.

KEY PRIORITIES

ASEAN Member States should consider the key priorities to combat fake news and disinformation:

① Strategic communication

Strategic communication is the planned and deliberate use of communication to achieve a specific goal or objective. It involves the development and implementation of communication plans and strategies that align with an organization's overall goals and objectives. Strategic communication is an essential tool for organizations to achieve their goals and objectives in an increasingly complex and competitive communication landscape.

② Education, awareness, and advocacy programs

Education, awareness, and advocacy programs are initiatives to inform and engage individuals or groups on a specific topic or issue. These programs can take various forms, such as workshops, seminars, public service announcements, advertising campaigns, social media outreach, and community events. The goals of education, awareness, and advocacy programs can vary depending on the specific issue or topic being addressed. Some common goals include: (a) Increasing knowledge and understanding of an issue: Education and awareness programs can help people understand the causes, effects, and potential solutions to a problem or issue; (b) Promoting behavior change: Education and awareness programs can encourage individuals to adopt new behaviors or practices that can improve their health, safety, or well-being; (c) Building support and engagement: Advocacy programs can increase the awareness of individuals or groups against the dangers of disinformation, and provide them with the knowledge and avenues for reporting instances when individuals or groups encounter them online; and (d) Influencing policy or decision-making: Advocacy programs can work to influence policy or decision-making at the local, national, or international level by raising awareness and building support for specific policies or proposals.

3 Promoting media and information literacy

Promoting media and information literacy (MIL) involves educating individuals on how to critically evaluate and use information from various media sources. It helps individuals to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the complex and ever-changing media landscape and to make informed decisions about the credibility and reliability of information they encounter. Promoting media and information literacy can involve various strategies, including: (a) Developing educational resources: Educators and organizations can develop curricula, lesson plans, and online resources that teach individuals how to analyze and evaluate media content; (b) Providing training and workshops: Workshops and training sessions can be held to teach individuals how to assess the credibility and reliability of different sources of information; (c) Supporting research: Researchers can study media literacy and its impact on individuals and society to develop evidence-based strategies for promoting media and information literacy; (d) Partnering with media organizations: Media organizations can work with educators and researchers to develop and promote media literacy initiatives that encourage critical thinking and responsible media consumption; and (e) Integrating MIL into policies and regulations: Governments and other organizations can integrate media literacy principles into policies and regulations related to media and information. Promoting media and information literacy is important because it helps individuals to become more informed and responsible consumers of media content. It can help individuals to avoid disinformation, propaganda, and other forms of harmful content that can have negative consequences for their lives and society as a whole. By promoting media and information literacy, individuals can become more engaged and active participants in their communities and in the wider world.

4 Fact-checking network

A fact-checking network is a group of organizations or individuals who work together to verify the accuracy of claims made by politicians, media outlets, and other sources of information. Fact-checking networks use a variety of tools and techniques to evaluate the credibility of statements and to determine whether they are supported by evidence. Some common methods used by fact-checking networks include: (a) Researching the claim: Fact-checkers may look at primary sources, such as government reports, scientific studies, or court documents to determine the accuracy

of a claim; (b) Consulting experts: Fact-checkers may consult with subject matter experts to verify the accuracy of technical or specialized claims; (c) Checking sources: Fact-checkers may verify the credibility of the sources used to support a claim; and (d) Fact-checking websites and social media posts: Fact-checkers may use specialized tools to evaluate the accuracy of information posted on social media or other websites. Once a claim has been evaluated, fact-checking networks may publish their findings on their website or share them with other organizations or media outlets. The goal of fact-checking networks is to provide accurate information to the public and to promote greater transparency and accountability among politicians and other sources of information. Fact-checking networks have become increasingly important in recent years due to the proliferation of disinformation and fake news on the internet and social media. By providing accurate and reliable information, fact-checking networks help to promote informed decision-making and reduce the spread of false or misleading information.

5 Applying international fact-checking networks code of principles

The International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) Code of Principles is a set of guidelines developed by fact-checking organizations around the world to promote transparency, accuracy, and impartiality in fact-checking. Applying the IFCN Code of Principles involves adhering to the following principles: (a) Nonpartisanship and fairness: Fact-checkers should provide accurate and impartial information to the public, without bias or political influence; (b) Transparency of sources: Fact-checkers should disclose their sources of information and provide links to their sources whenever possible; (c) Transparency of funding and organization: Fact-checkers should disclose their funding sources and organizational structure to promote transparency and accountability; (d) Transparency of methodology: Fact-checkers should clearly explain their fact-checking methodology and make their criteria and processes available to the public; and (e) Open and honest corrections: Fact-checkers should correct any errors promptly and transparently, and make clear the corrections made to their original content. By applying the IFCN Code of Principles, fact-checking organizations can help to promote greater transparency and accuracy in fact-checking, and to build trust among the public. Fact-checking organizations that meet the requirements of the code can also apply for IFCN certification, which can help to promote their credibility and legitimacy.

⑥ Inter-agency coordination

Inter-agency coordination refers to the process of collaboration and communication among different agencies or organizations working towards a common goal or objective. In the context of government, inter-agency coordination often involves coordinating efforts among various departments or agencies to achieve a specific policy or programmatic objective. Inter-agency coordination is important because it allows for the sharing of information, expertise, and resources, which can lead to more effective decision-making and implementation. It can also help to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the process. Effective inter-agency coordination requires clear communication, shared objectives, and a willingness to work together towards a common goal. It may involve regular meetings, joint planning and decision-making, and the sharing of information and resources.

⑦ Cross-functional collaboration

Cross-functional collaboration refers to the process of working together across different functions or departments within an organization to achieve a common goal or objective. In cross-functional collaboration, individuals with different areas of expertise or perspectives work together to share information, resources, and ideas to achieve a common goal. Cross-functional collaboration is important because it can lead to better decision-making, increased innovation, and improved outcomes. It can also help to break down silos within an organization and encourage a more integrated approach to problem-solving. Effective cross-functional collaboration requires clear communication, shared objectives, and a willingness to work together towards a common goal. It may involve regular meetings, joint planning and decision-making, and the sharing of information and resources. In addition, it may require a culture shift within an organization to encourage greater collaboration and integration across functions.

⑧ Law enforcement

Law enforcement refers to the system of agencies and individuals responsible for enforcing the law, maintaining public safety, and upholding the legal rights of citizens. The primary function of law enforcement is to prevent and investigate crime and to apprehend and prosecute those who

violate the law. Effective law enforcement requires a balance between enforcing the law and protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens. Law enforcement officers are expected to exercise discretion and judgment in carrying out their duties and to adhere to ethical and professional standards. The relationship between law enforcement and the community is an important aspect of effective law enforcement and requires ongoing communication and collaboration.

TEN WAYS TO DETECT FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION

The guideline provides ten ways to recognize and detect fake news and identify disinformation in the media for government of ASEAN Member States.

ASEAN member states may:

- ① **Check the source.** Check the web address for the looked page. Fake news sites may have spelling errors in the URL or use less conventional domain extensions. For unfamiliar sites, the About Us section must be observed carefully.

- ② **Check the author** whether they are credible, real, have good reputation, identified expert, and having particular agenda.

- ③ **Check other sources** such as other reputable news or media outlines about the story, citing a credible source, and editorial guidelines.

- ④ **Maintain a critical mindset** by asking why has this story been written? Is it promoting a particular cause or agenda? Is it trying to make people click through to another website?

- ⑤ **Check the facts.** Credible news stories will include plenty of facts – data, statistics, and quotes from experts. If these are missing, question why. Reports with false information often contain incorrect dates or altered timelines, so it's a good idea to check when the article was published. Is it a current or old news story?

- ⑥ **Check the comments.** Even if the article or video is legitimate, the comments below may not be. Often links or comments posted in response

to content can be autogenerated by bots or people hired to put the misleading or confusing information.

- ⑦ **Check biases.** People all have biases —could these be influencing the people's response to the article? Social media can create echo chambers by suggesting stories that match people's existing browsing habits, interests, and opinions. The more people read from diverse sources and perspectives, the more likely it is that people can draw accurate conclusions.

- ⑧ **Check whether it's a joke.** Satirical websites are popular, and sometimes it is not always clear whether a story is just a joke or parody. Check the website to see if it's known for satire or creating funny stories.

- ⑨ **Check if images are authentic.** The image that people see on social media could have been edited or manipulated. Possible signs include warping —where straight lines in the background now appear wavy— as well as strange shadows, jagged edges, or skin tone that looks too perfect. Bear in mind, too, that an image may be accurate but simply used in a misleading context. The tools such as Google's Reverse Image Search could be used to check where an image originates from and whether it has been altered.

- ⑩ **Use a fact-checking site or system.** Fake news relies on believers reposting, retweeting, or otherwise sharing false information.

EIGHT RESPONSES TO COMBAT THE FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION

In responding and combating to fake news and disinformation in the media, the government of ASEAN member states may:

① **Fact-check the information**

Before responding to any piece of information, it's important to ensure that the claims being made are true. Use or develop credible fact-checking websites to verify the accuracy of the information.

② **Identify the source**

Determine where the information is coming from and who is disseminating it. Some sources may have a history of spreading false information, and it's important to take that into account when evaluating the credibility of the information.

③ **Provide accurate information**

Provide accurate and credible information that refutes the false claims being made. Use reputable sources to back up the claims.

④ **Use clear and concise language**

Avoid using jargon or technical terms that may be difficult for the average person to understand. Use clear and concise language to ensure that the message is easily understood.

⑤ **Address the impact**

Explain how the false information may impact people and why it's important to correct the disinformation.

⑥ Use social media

Social media can be a powerful tool to combat fake news and disinformation. Share accurate information and fact-checks on government social media platforms to help educate others.

⑦ Be persistent

It may take time and persistence to correct false information, so be prepared to continue addressing the issue until it's resolved.

⑧ Don't amplify the message

Sharing or reposting the fake news or disinformation only helps to spread it further. Instead, focus on correcting the record or sharing accurate information to counteract the false information.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES FOR COMBATING FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION

ASEAN Member States may consider to have some potential multidisciplinary approaches for combating fake news and disinformation in the media:

① **Fact-checking services**

These are organizations that provide fact-checking services for news articles, social media posts, and other forms of information.

② **Media literacy training**

This involves providing education and training to individuals and organizations on how to identify and combat fake news and disinformation such as training programs, workshops, and online courses.

③ **Crowdsourcing and citizen journalism**

Crowdsourced fact-checking and citizen journalism platforms can help to identify and debunk fake news and disinformation.

④ **Artificial Intelligent (AI)-powered tools**

AI-powered tools can help to identify and flag fake news and disinformation.

⑤ **Digital media literacy platforms**

These platforms can provide individuals with the skills and tools necessary to identify and combat fake news and disinformation.

The process for combating fake news and disinformation in the media will require a multidisciplinary approach that involves expertise in media, technology, communication, and social marketing. It will also require ongoing adaptation and improvement to remain effective in an ever-evolving media landscape. The process for combating fake news and disinformation in the media may involve:

- ① Research and development for identifying and combatting fake news and disinformation. This may involve collaborations with experts in media, technology, and communication

- ② Support and training to ensure that it could be effectively implemented. This may involve providing technical support, training workshops, and ongoing guidance and support.

- ③ Evaluation and improvement to continually evaluate and improve its tools and strategies to ensure that they remain effective in combatting fake news and disinformation. This may involve collecting and analyzing data, gathering feedback from users, and making necessary adjustments and improvements.

CREATE A COUNTER-MESSAGE: STRONG, RELIABLE, AND CREDIBLE

Creating a counter-message that is strong, reliable, and credible requires careful planning and execution. Here are some steps that ASEAN Member States can take to create effective counter-messages:

① Identify the target audience

The first step in creating an effective counter-message is to identify the target audience. AMS need to understand the demographics, beliefs, and attitudes of their target audience to tailor their message to their needs;

② Develop a clear and concise message

The counter-message needs to be clear and concise, using language and imagery that resonate with the target audience. AMS should use evidence-based information to support their claims and avoid jargon or technical language that may confuse or alienate their audience.

③ Establish credibility

To establish credibility, AMS need to use trusted sources of information and communicate transparently. This may involve using subject matter experts, providing references to published studies or data, and communicating openly and honestly with the public.

④ Leverage social media and other communication channels

AMS can leverage social media and other communication channels to disseminate their counter-message to a wider audience. Social media platforms can be used to create shareable content and to engage with the public.

⑤ Monitor and evaluate effectiveness

AMS should monitor the effectiveness of their counter-message through

ongoing evaluation and data analysis. This will enable them to refine their message and tactics to reach their target audience more effectively.

⑥ **Work with other stakeholders**

Collaboration with other stakeholders such as civil society organizations, community leaders, and the media can help to amplify the AMS's counter-message and build trust and credibility with the public.

Creating strong, reliable, and credible government information is essential to building trust and transparency between the government and its citizens in order to combat fake news and disinformation in the Media. ASEAN Member States should ensure to have activities in:

① **Conducting research**

Conduct research to identify the most important topics and issues that citizens need information about. This can help ensure that government information is relevant and useful to citizens.

② **Establishing standards**

Establish clear and consistent standards for the creation and dissemination of government information. This can help ensure that the information is accurate, consistent, and reliable.

③ **Developing guidelines**

Develop guidelines for the creation of different types of government information, such as reports, statistics, and policy briefs. These guidelines can help ensure that the information is presented in a clear, concise, and accessible manner.

④ **Ensuring accuracy**

Use fact-checking and peer-review processes to ensure that government information is accurate and reliable. This can help prevent errors, omissions, and misinformation from being disseminated.

⑤ **Providing training**

Provide training for government employees on how to create and disseminate accurate and reliable information. This can include training on data collection, analysis, and presentation, as well as on media and communication skills.

⑥ **Engaging stakeholders**

Engage stakeholders in the development of government information. This can include seeking feedback from citizens, experts, and other stakeholders on the relevance and usefulness of the information and incorporating this feedback into the development process.

⑦ **Ensuring accessibility**

Ensure that government information is accessible to all citizens, regardless of their level of education or literacy. This can include providing information in different formats, such as audio, video, and graphics, as well as in different languages.

⑧ **Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of government information initiatives to ensure that they are achieving their goals. This can include tracking website traffic, surveying citizens on the usefulness of the information, and analyzing media coverage.

NORMS TO EMPOWER, PREVENT AND PROTECT THE CITIZEN

In order to develop and create the norms to empower, prevent and protect the citizen, ASEAN Member States may have

① Norms promoting media literacy and critical thinking

These norms can help citizens to develop the skills necessary to identify and evaluate reliable sources of information. They can include guidelines on how to fact-check information, how to assess the credibility of sources, and how to distinguish between news and opinion.

② Norms promoting responsible sharing of information

These norms can encourage citizens to share information responsibly and discourage the spread of false or misleading information. They can include guidelines on how to verify information before sharing it, how to avoid amplifying false or misleading information, and how to correct false information that has been shared.

③ Norms promoting transparency and accountability

These norms can encourage media outlets, technology companies, and other stakeholders to be transparent about their practices and to be accountable for the accuracy of the information they share. They can include guidelines on how to disclose conflicts of interest, how to correct errors, and how to respond to complaints about fake news and disinformation.

④ Norms promoting the independence and integrity of the media

These norms can help to protect the independence and integrity of the media, and to ensure that journalists can operate freely and without interference. They can include guidelines on how to protect journalists from harassment, intimidation, and violence, and how to support independent media outlets.

⑤ Norms promoting legal and regulatory measures

These norms can help to enforce laws and regulations that protect citizens from the harmful effects of fake news and disinformation. They can include guidelines on how to prosecute those who spread false or misleading information, how to regulate social media platforms, and how to ensure that citizens have access to reliable information.

In terms of the digital platform, the norms that may be applicable in digital platforms to develop and create the norm to empower, prevent and protect the citizen while combating fake news and disinformation in the media:

① Transparency

Digital platforms should be transparent about their policies and algorithms for filtering, ranking, and removing content. This will help users understand how their content is being moderated and ensure fairness and accountability in the platform's decision-making.

② Fact-checking

Digital platforms should implement fact-checking mechanisms to identify and flag false or misleading information. Fact-checking should be conducted by reputable third-party organizations to ensure independence and impartiality.

③ User education

Digital platforms should provide users with resources and tools to help them identify and report false or misleading information. This can include educational campaigns, guides, and tutorials on how to spot and report fake news. The government of each ASEAN Member State should apply core values of digital literacy which consist of Responsibility, Empathy, Authenticity, Discernment, and Integrity (READI).

④ Empowerment of users

Digital platforms should empower users to take control of their own online

experience by allowing them to personalize their content and filter out unwanted or potentially harmful content.

⑤ **Accountability**

Digital platforms should be held accountable for the content that they host and the actions that they take in response to false or misleading information. This can include legal accountability for failing to remove harmful content, or fines and penalties for violating user privacy or data protection laws.

⑥ **Collaboration**

Digital platforms should collaborate with other stakeholders, such as fact-checkers, academicians, and civil society organizations, to develop and implement effective solutions for combating fake news and disinformation. Collaboration can help to leverage the expertise and resources of different stakeholders and ensure a coordinated response to the problem.

BLUEPRINT AND ACTION PLAN

ASEAN Member States could have a blueprint and action plan for combating fake news and disinformation by:

① **Establishing a task force**

Create a task force or commission to develop and oversee a comprehensive strategy for combating fake news and disinformation.

② **Conducting research and analysis**

Conduct research and analysis to better understand the sources, methods, and impact of fake news and disinformation. This can help inform the development of effective countermeasures.

③ **Developing a public awareness campaign**

Develop a public awareness campaign to educate the public on the dangers of fake news and disinformation and how to identify and combat them. The campaign should be tailored to different audiences, including youth, seniors, and non-English speakers.

④ **Partnering with fact-checking organizations**

Partner with fact-checking organizations to help identify and flag fake news and disinformation. This can include providing funding and support for these organizations.

⑤ **Increasing media literacy and critical thinking**

Develop and implement educational programs to increase media literacy and critical thinking skills among the public. This can include providing training to teachers and students in schools and universities.

⑥ **Regulating social media platforms**

Work with social media platforms to develop and implement policies to combat fake news and disinformation. This can include increasing moderation, flagging potentially false or misleading content, and taking action against accounts that repeatedly spread disinformation.

⑦ **Encouraging media diversity**

Encourage media diversity by providing funding and other support for non-profit media outlets and local news organizations.

⑧ **Promoting transparency**

Promote transparency by requiring political actors, businesses, and other organizations to disclose their sources of funding and affiliations. This can help the public identify potential conflicts of interest or bias in the information being shared.

⑨ **Establishing legal consequences for the spread of disinformation**

Establish legal consequences for the spread of disinformation, such as fines or other penalties for individuals or organizations found to be intentionally spreading false information; and

⑩ **Fostering dialogue and respect**

Foster a culture of dialogue and respect by encouraging open communication and respectful debate. This can help reduce the spread of disinformation and promote a more informed and engaged public.

MEASUREMENT OF CREATIVE CAMPAIGN

ASEAN Member States could measure the effectiveness of creative campaigns designed to boost media and information literacy such as through:

- ① **Pre- and post-campaign surveys:** Conduct surveys before and after the campaign to assess changes in knowledge and behavior related to media and information literacy. This can help identify the impact of the campaign on the target audience.

- ② **Social media analytics:** Monitor social media metrics such as likes, shares, and comments to gauge the reach and engagement of the campaign. This can help assess the effectiveness of the campaign in generating interest and conversation.

- ③ **Website analytics:** Monitor website analytics such as page views, time spent on site, and click-through rates to assess the impact of the campaign on website traffic and engagement. This can help determine the effectiveness of the campaign in driving action.

- ④ **Case studies and testimonials:** Collect case studies and testimonials from individuals or organizations that have participated in the campaign to assess its impact. This can help identify specific examples of how the campaign has influenced behavior and decision-making.

- ⑤ **Focus groups:** Conduct focus groups with members of the target audience to gain in-depth insights into their perceptions and attitudes toward media and information literacy. This can help identify specific areas of impact and improvement.

- ⑥ **Behavior tracking:** Use data tracking tools to monitor changes in behavior related to media and information literacy, such as increased use of fact-checking tools or more critical evaluation of media sources. This can help assess the long-term impact of the campaign.

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS

ASEAN Member States could involve the internal stakeholders to play an important role in conducting media literacy initiatives and fact-checking programs by participating in training, providing resources and support, promoting media literacy internally, encouraging fact-checking, incorporating media literacy into organizational culture, conducting fact-checking programs, and collaborating with external stakeholders. By involving internal stakeholders in these efforts, organizations can promote a culture of critical thinking, informed decision-making, and responsible media consumption.

Combating fake news and disinformation in the media is an important responsibility of governments. In order to effectively address this issue, it is important for ASEAN Member States to involve internal stakeholders within the government:

① Government agencies

Various government agencies have a role to play in combating disinformation. This includes agencies responsible for media regulation, national security, law enforcement, and public information. These agencies can coordinate their efforts to address disinformation, share information and intelligence, and develop policies and strategies to combat disinformation.

② Politicians and elected officials

Politicians and elected officials have a responsibility to counter disinformation and promote truthful information. They can use their platforms to inform the public about disinformation campaigns and to promote media literacy and critical thinking skills.

③ Public servants and civil servants

Public servants and civil servants who work in communication, public affairs, and policy development can play a role in developing and implementing policies and initiatives to combat disinformation. They can also provide training and capacity-building for government officials and other stakeholders.

④ Legal and regulatory experts

Legal and regulatory experts can provide guidance on the development of laws and regulations to address disinformation, as well as the enforcement of existing laws and regulations. They can also advise on issues related to data privacy and security.

⑤ Intelligence agencies

Intelligence agencies can provide valuable insights and intelligence on disinformation campaigns, including their sources and methods of dissemination. They can work with other government agencies to develop strategies to counter disinformation.

In terms of involving internal stakeholders, the government of ASEAN Member States could have some possible approaches including:

① Inter-agency collaboration

Government agencies can collaborate with each other to develop strategies and policies to combat disinformation. They can share information and intelligence and coordinate their efforts to ensure a comprehensive and effective response.

② Capacity-building

Government agencies can provide training and capacity-building for their staff to develop the skills and knowledge needed to combat disinformation.

③ Policy development

Government agencies can develop policies and guidelines for combating disinformation, such as guidelines for responsible communication, protocols for handling disinformation campaigns, and regulations to ensure the accuracy of information in the media.

④ Public awareness-raising

Government officials can use their platforms to raise public awareness about

disinformation and promote media literacy and critical thinking skills.

⑤ **Partnerships and collaborations**

Government agencies can collaborate with external stakeholders, such as media organizations, civil society groups, and technology companies, to develop joint initiatives and share resources and expertise.

Combating fake news and disinformation in the media is an important task that requires the involvement of various stakeholders, including external stakeholders of government. ASEAN Member States could involve these stakeholders:

① **Media organizations**

Media organizations play a critical role in combating fake news and disinformation. They can be invited to participate in public education campaigns and workshops to promote media literacy and responsible journalism practices. They can also be encouraged to adopt fact-checking practices and to report on disinformation campaigns and their impacts.

② **Civil society groups**

Civil society groups, such as non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and advocacy groups, can provide valuable insights and expertise on the impact of disinformation on marginalized communities and vulnerable groups. They can be involved in the development of policies and initiatives aimed at combating disinformation, as well as in public education and awareness-raising campaigns.

③ **Academic institutions**

Academic institutions, such as universities and research institutes, can contribute to the development of evidence-based policies and initiatives aimed at combating disinformation. They can also provide training and capacity-building for government agencies and other stakeholders on topics related to disinformation, media literacy, and digital citizenship.

④ **Technology companies**

Technology companies, such as social media platforms and search engines, have a responsibility to prevent the spread of disinformation on their platforms. They can be involved in the development of industry-wide standards and best practices for combating disinformation, as well as in the deployment of technological solutions to detect and mitigate the impact of disinformation campaigns.

⑤ **International organizations**

International organizations, such as the United Nations and regional bodies, can play a key role in coordinating efforts to combat disinformation across borders. They can provide technical assistance and expertise to governments and other stakeholders, as well as facilitate the exchange of best practices and lessons learned.

In terms of involving external stakeholders of government, the government of AMS could have some possible approaches including:

① **Consultations and dialogues**

Governments can engage with external stakeholders through consultations and dialogues to seek their inputs and perspectives on policies and initiatives related to combating disinformation.

② **Partnerships and collaborations**

Governments can form partnerships and collaborations with external stakeholders to develop joint initiatives and share resources and expertise.

③ **Public education and awareness-raising campaigns**

Governments can launch public education and awareness-raising campaigns to inform citizens about the risks and impacts of disinformation and to promote media literacy and responsible digital citizenship practices.

④ **Training and capacity-building**

Governments can provide training and capacity-building for external stakeholders on topics related to disinformation, media literacy, and digital citizenship.

⑤ **Advocacy and lobbying**

External stakeholders can engage in advocacy and lobbying efforts to raise awareness about the risks and impacts of disinformation and to promote policies and initiatives aimed at combating it.

MANAGING OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION IN DATA MANAGEMENT

Managing official government information on data management is essential for combating fake news and disinformation. The governments of ASEAN Member States can take to manage their data effectively:

① Establish clear data governance policies

Governments need to establish clear data governance policies to ensure that their data is accurate, reliable, and secure. This can include policies for data collection, storage, and sharing, as well as guidelines for data quality and integrity. In addition, clear sources of reliable and accurate information are pertinent in combating fake news and disinformation. Furthermore, a clear timeframe for producing clarification/debunking hoax if the fake news and disinformation are related to official statement/policy are of importance as well.

② Invest in data management systems

Governments should invest in data management systems to ensure that their data is organized, accessible, and easy to use. This can include systems for data storage, retrieval, and analysis, as well as software for data visualization and reporting.

③ Ensure data security

Governments need to ensure that their data is secure from cyberattacks and other security threats. This can include measures such as data encryption, access controls, and regular security audits.

④ Promote data transparency

Governments should promote data transparency by making their data available to the public in an accessible and understandable format. This can include publishing data on government websites, creating data portals, and making data available through Application Programming Interfaces (APIs).

⑤ **Establish data partnerships**

Governments should establish partnerships with other organizations, such as universities, research institutions, and non-governmental organizations, to collaborate on data management and analysis. This can help to increase the quality and usefulness of government data.

⑥ **Conduct data analysis**

Governments should conduct regular data analysis to identify patterns, trends, and insights that can be used to inform policy decisions and combat fake news and disinformation. This can include using data analytics tools to detect fake news and disinformation in social media and other online platforms.

⑦ **Share data insights**

Governments should share their data insights with other government agencies, as well as with the public. This can help to promote transparency and accountability and build trust with citizens.

RECOMMENDATION AND WAY FORWARD

The guideline provides several recommendations and ways forward that could assist ASEAN Member States to combat fake news and disinformation and promote a more informed and engaged society. In combating fake news and disinformation in the media, the governments of AMS require a multi-faceted approach that involves:

- ① **Strengthen media literacy education:** Governments should prioritize media literacy education in schools and communities to equip citizens with the skills to identify and avoid fake news and disinformation. Education is critical in empowering citizens to recognize and resist false information. There should be a concerted effort to increase media and digital literacy among citizens to ensure they can distinguish between fact and fiction in the media.

- ② **Combat fake news and disinformation at the source:** Governments should take measures to identify and combat disinformation campaigns and their sources, both domestically and abroad.

- ③ **Fact-checking sustainability:** Fact-checking will continue to be an important tool for combating fake news and disinformation in the media. Fact-checking organizations should receive adequate funding and support to conduct their work effectively and sustainability.

- ④ **Encourage responsible social media use:** Social media platforms should encourage responsible use of their platforms, such as by flagging false information and encouraging users to fact-check before sharing.

- ⑤ **Tech Platform such as Meta (Facebook, Instagram etc), X (Twitter), Google and others may apply technology to screen news for the public,** such as displaying statistics or various criteria for measuring the reliability of the content associated with posts and online platforms, and showing the reliability status of individuals and platforms, which will help users to

recognize potential problems more clearly.

- ⑥ **Promote ethical journalism:** Media organizations should adhere to ethical journalism practices, such as fact-checking, verifying sources, and avoiding sensationalism. The media also has a responsibility to combat fake news and disinformation. Media organizations should uphold ethical standards and ensure that their reporting is fair, accurate, and balanced.

- ⑦ **The media may present news along with preliminary guidance for verifying the authenticity of stories,** such as investigating the sources and analyzing the reasonableness of information, as an example of the method for screening news.

- ⑧ **There should be an exchange or cooperation on articles and international news** from ASEAN between ASEAN Member States, and States should also cooperate on setting up verification channels for international fake news (e.g. international articles that require verification by the AMS).

- ⑨ **Foster collaboration:** Governments, media organizations, civil society organizations, the media, technology companies, academicians/universities, and individuals should collaborate to combat fake news and disinformation, such as by sharing best practices, data, and information through relevant ASEAN forums such as the ASEAN Task Force on Fake News (TFFN).

- ⑩ **The private sector may help by supporting, developing, or recommending useful technology for verifying fake news.** If the private sector can develop technology that the government can make use of, this will benefit both sectors. Such technology may be used to extract data in the form of text, posts, or other forms of information online that are likely to be fake news in order to enable the government to investigate such information and publish the facts to the public.

- ⑪ **Invest in technology:** Governments and media organizations should invest in technology to identify and combat fake news and disinformation, such as by using artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms. Artificial

intelligence can be used to identify and flag false or misleading information, while blockchain technology can be used to create secure and transparent systems for sharing information.

12 Regulation: Governments should work to develop regulations and guidelines for digital platforms to ensure that they are accountable for the content they host and the actions they take in response to false information. Regulations should also promote transparency, fairness, and accountability in digital platforms.

13 The government may increase measures to spot fake news in order to prevent the public from receiving disinformation, especially fake news that affects the people. There may be some notifications to the public through various channels, such as press conferences and field visits, to raise awareness among a large number of people.

14 Identify Deepfake: Deepfake technology has grown rapidly like fake news since then and has become more available to the general population. Deepfake is a type of artificial intelligence used to create convincing images, audio and video hoaxes. Deepfakes and the misuse of synthetic content pose a clear, present, and evolving threat to the public across national security, law enforcement, financial, and society such as social media disinformation campaigns. ASEAN Member states need to consider how to educate the public to identify a deep fake.

The guideline may be challenging to achieve, but it is a goal worth striving for. By working together and taking proactive steps to combat fake news and disinformation, ASEAN Member States can create a society where accurate and truthful information is readily available to all. In such a society, the government and the media are trusted sources of information, and individuals have the skills and knowledge to identify and avoid fake news and disinformation.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION TOOLS

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<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ETdFMiOV3z7ObVWf4MgXnYGeoTizUYVP/view>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fYmFvYarSk1OMi1cQnp9RylZzlld6gqJ/view>

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ข่าวปลอม อย่าแชร์! ใช้หม้อทอดไร้น้ำมันปรุงอาหาร ทำให้ท้องระเบิด | ศูนย์ต่อต้านข่าวปลอม | Anti-Fake News Center Thailand (antifakenewscenter.com)

ข่าวปลอม อย่าแชร์! กรมการจัดหางานเปิดรับสมัครแรงงานเก็บเห็ดเห็ดเกาหลี | ศูนย์ต่อต้านข่าวปลอม | Anti-Fake News Center Thailand (antifakenewscenter.com)

ข่าวปลอม อย่าแชร์! คนไทยต้องแบกภาระจ่ายเงินซื้อน้ำมันที่มีราคาแพงที่สุดในโลก | ศูนย์ต่อต้านข่าวปลอม | Anti-Fake News Center Thailand (antifakenewscenter.com)

ข่าวปลอม อย่าแชร์! ผู้ที่ดื่มเครื่องดื่มแอลกอฮอล์ จะไม่ติดเชื้อโควิด 19 และดื่มทุกวันจะทำให้ผลดีกว่าการออกกำลังกาย | ศูนย์ต่อต้านข่าวปลอม | Anti-Fake News Center Thailand (antifakenewscenter.com)

ข่าวปลอม อย่าแชร์! รัฐบาลเล็งเตรียมเก็บภาษีรถเก่าอายุ 10 ปี กระตุ้นเศรษฐกิจป้ายแดง | ศูนย์ต่อต้านข่าวปลอม | Anti-Fake News Center Thailand (antifakenewscenter.com)

ข่าวปลอม อย่าแชร์! สายการบินติดต่อประชาชนผ่านไลน์ เพื่อรับสิทธิ์บัตรกำนันตัวเที่ยวบินไปกลับ | ศูนย์ต่อต้านข่าวปลอม | Anti-Fake News Center Thailand (antifakenewscenter.com)

ความร้ายแรงของไข้หวัดใหญ่สายใหม่ “ไวรัสโคโรนา” มีวิธีป้องกันคือ ต้องรักษาความชุ่มชื้นของเยื่อเมือก ลำคอ อย่าให้ลำคอแห้งโดยเด็ดขาด ข่าวปลอม อย่าแชร์ | ศูนย์ต่อต้านข่าวปลอม | Anti-Fake News Center Thailand (antifakenewscenter.com)

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ANNEX 1: CASE STUDIES



BRUNEI CASE STUDY

Brunei has several efforts to combat fake news and disinformation in the media: (1) Talian Darussalam 123, a National hotline (TD123) for the public to report or enquire about fake news; (2) Government Committees which have main tasks: (a) to detect fake news, (b) to analyze and decide on an action to be taken, (c) to anticipate peak seasons; (3) Awareness Campaigns via television, radio, print media, and government and private social media accounts; (4) Government agencies in order to maintain direct contact with social media platforms to assess content and take appropriate action.

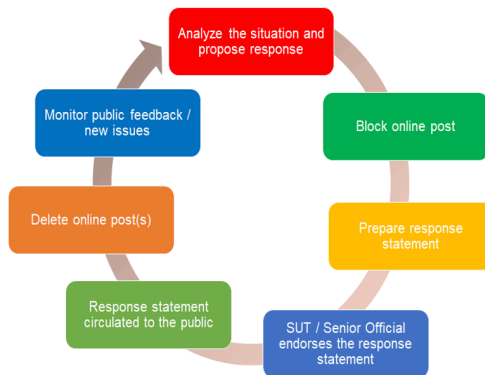
Brunei takes a whole of government and a whole of national approaches. Under the whole of government approach, agencies work together in tackling fake news relevant to their purview. Aside from the cooperation between those agencies, proper coordination is required at a strategic level, hence the need for a strategic-minded government. For example:

1. Media and Public Relations Task Force under COVID-19 Steering Committee;
2. Monitoring, analysis and actions;
3. Fake news and also public sentiments related to COVID-19;
4. Dissemination of vital and useful information;
5. Broadcast and air public statements from relevant agencies and organizations addressing fake news posts, articles and materials;
6. Broadcast and air content from relevant agencies such as the Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry (AiTi) to raise general public awareness regarding false news and information;
7. Produce and disseminate creative content such as Television (TV) series and promos to help spread the message on fake news;
8. Personal Contact (PC) Programme for grassroots-level communities as a platform to increase awareness on misinformation and disinformation and how to deal with it;

9. Recording and assessing sentiments from the public through various social media platforms before it turns into misinformation; and
10. Public engagement through local comedians, influencers and public figures.

The Information Department carries out its initiative of engaging the public nationwide and keeping them updated on the responsible handling of information, on the importance of fact checking and verification, as well as the responsible usage of the Internet and social media. State broadcaster Radio Television Brunei (RTB) conveys public service announcements and other messages from government agencies to raise awareness on fake news and how to deal with them on a regular basis. Both the Information Department and RTB also conveys fake news awareness messages through its online and social media accounts.

In a joint effort to promote responsible and safe use of social media, the Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry (AITI) has worked with



Picture 1: Work flow response

All agencies follow their own respective internal guidelines to cut down response time. PMO and AiTi to take down posts where necessary, Brunei has maintained good communication within ASEAN:

1. Under the ASEAN Task Force on Fake News (TFFN) we have a

framework for direct contact with all AMS through the designated focal points to discuss matters of mutual interest related to fake news;

2. It would not only cover ASEAN matters on fake news but it could also be used to coordinate action or monitoring between AMS, either bilaterally or multilaterally.

In the global context the biggest challenge for Brunei is studying trends to better anticipate potential fake news sources and prepare “counter-information” before they appear. Within the region, the main challenge would be deciding on collective strategies that are mutually beneficial amongst ASEAN Member States, in line with the ASEAN Charter. From the local perspective, the main challenge is in instilling the “fact-checking and questioning” mindset amongst all citizens and residents in Brunei Darussalam.

Brunei recommends:

1. equip local youth with the knowledge and skill to raise awareness on misinformation in ways that could benefit the nation;
2. raise public awareness on the different types of misinformation;
3. encourage public participation in detecting, reporting and “red-flagging” fake news;
4. enhance public awareness on existing laws;
5. anticipate future trends in misinformation; and
6. promote the responsible handling and treatment of news and information at all levels.



CAMBODIA CASE STUDY

Cambodia has an anti-fake news committee established by the Ministry of Information on 11 March 2020. The mandate of the committee is

1. to monitor the dissemination of fake news on both media and social media;
2. to fact-check with competent authorities and respond to the public in a timely manner, and
3. to take action with relevant authorities in blocking websites, accounts, or pages that promote false information that can cause social unrest.

The committee is developing strategic planning for fighting against fake news

The sub-committee on Searching and Identification of the Anti-Fake News Committee is responsible for monitoring and detecting all types of false information disseminated including insulting of the King. This sub-committee will report the detected fake news to the sub-committee on Communication and Action for further action.

At the same time, when fake news is detected, the relevant ministries, institutions, and agencies will have a quick response through a spoke person or press release, government news and broadcasting agencies as well as private agencies in a timely manner. In the worst case, legal action will be taken.

Cambodia has several norms in order to empower, prevent, and protect the citizen from fake news and disinformation in the media:

1. promote media, information and digital literacy,
2. responsible sharing of information,
3. promote transparency and accountability,
4. promote the independence and integrity of the media, and
5. promote legal measures (enforce law and regulation).

Cambodia has also several strategies regarding education and awareness

programs in combating fake news and disinformation:

1. education and awareness campaign on media and information literacy;
2. roundtable discussion series; (3) organized workshops or seminars;
3. publication such as (a) translated and distributed UNESCO's book on Journalism, Fake News, and Disinformation into the Khmer Language (2020); (b) handbook on Harmful Effects and Government Actions in Dealing with Fake News (2021).

In order to conduct media literacy initiatives and fact-check programs, three ministries are involved:

1. the Ministry of Education is conducting the Media and Information Literacy initiative;
2. the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication and
3. the Ministry of Information are developing a National Framework on Media, Information and Digital Literacy (MIDL).

The government of Cambodia also create strong, reliable, and credible government information through

1. government news and media agencies (AKP, RNK, TVK);
2. the official Website/Facebook Page of respective ministries and institution;
3. official publication from respective ministries and institutions, and
4. credible/reliable spoke person.



INDONESIA CASE STUDY

The Indonesian government has launched a media literacy campaign that aims to educate citizens on how to identify and avoid fake news and disinformation. The campaign includes public service announcements, workshops, and educational materials that are distributed across the country. Working with social media platforms: The Indonesian government has worked with social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter to combat the spread of fake news and disinformation. This includes developing mechanisms to remove false content and promoting accurate information through official government accounts.

Indonesia has the Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Informatics (Permenkominfo) number 2/2021 about the Strategic Plan (Renstra) for the Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kominfo) 2020-2024. The regulation includes Hoax Management as one of the strategic plans of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics to reduce information bias, especially on government programs, and put a serious commitment to controlling fake news. Policies taken by the Ministry of Communication and Informatic include drafting regulations that support more effective hoax control, managing hoax narrative counters, and building public awareness with appropriate literacy. One of the implementations of the Hoax Management program is the creation of daily releases by Directorate General of Informatics Application (Locally Directorate of Informatics Applications) by labelling or stamping the hoaxes, disinformation, and misinformation on negative news that circulates in society.

In creating a counter-message, Indonesia develops strong, reliable, and credible government information. The information is conveyed by the highest authorized officials so that the message is able to control the public, reduce uncertainty, and free from bias, and is supported by strong evidence. For example, Coordinating Ministries are responsible to draft and disseminate fake news counter-narrative in the sector of "Political, Legal and Security Affairs" (locally abbreviated as Polhukam), the Economic and Maritime sector, and the sector of Human Development and Culture (locally abbreviated as PMK).

Indonesia uses both of rational for a strategic approach to government (decentralization approach) and taking a whole-of-government approach

(centralization approach) because Indonesia adheres to the regional autonomy government system, namely there are arrangements in the central and regional areas. So that local governments can use a strategic approach according to their needs. National cases can be regional interests, national cases cannot be regional interests, regional cases can be national interests.

In terms of data management, Indonesia establishes an office for 24-hour for negative content handling for issue monitoring using AIS machine. The office receives complaints from internal and external stakeholders for example receiving complaints from the public and Ministries/Institutions/Agencies. The officer checks complaints through the AIS machine. Then there will be a verification of substance to the relevant agency of the complaint. After verification is approved, the office publishes and distributes releases including carrying out additional public communication activities where necessary. The results of the hoax document stamps were published by the Public Relations Bureau of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, we have a channel 'cekhoaks.dindingaduan konten.id', and a Telegram chatbot. Furthermore, the Ministry of Communication and Informatics issued a daily official release regarding hoaxes, disinformation, and misinformation circulating in the community.

The Directorate of Public Communication Governance and Partnership of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics has compiled the Final Norms of Standard Procedures and Criteria (NSPK) Report Clarifying Hoax News, Misleading Information, and Counter Negative Narratives.

In addition, the Ministry of Communication and Informatics in collaboration with Siberkreasi (external) has launched the National Movement for Digital Literacy 2021-2024 with four digital literacy frameworks, namely digital skills, digital culture, digital ethics, and digital safety.

The Indonesian government also works with various fact-checking communities and channels such as the Indonesian Anti-Defamation Society (Mafindo), the Fact-Check Media Alliance, and other civil societies in dealing with hoaxes.



LAO CASE STUDY

Regarding the national mechanisms and efforts to combat fake news and misinformation in Lao PDR, the Lao Government, in particular, the Mass Media Department under the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism have informed all state and private media outlets to transform their traditional methods of providing news via various platforms to reach all target audiences, both in urban and rural areas. This will ensure that every citizen has the fundamental right to access information, especially amid the rapid growth of information technology.

On the other hand, Lao PDR also has to face many problems from fake news, misinformation, and disinformation which creates misunderstandings and disorder in the society affecting development and social security. Consequently, it is now very important to be more than cautious and conscious with regard to the consumption of information. It is not only affected by the political, economic, and socio-cultural developments of the Lao PDR, but also a global challenge. As for the Lao PDR, we have announced the Laos Law on Prevention and Combating Cyber Crime; the Media Law; the Prime Ministerial Decree on the management of information circulation on the internet; and Guidelines for the Use of Social-Media.

To address these issues, in particular, to consist with the abovementioned regulations, our Ministry has closely worked with the line ministries concerned namely:

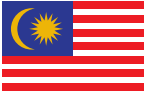
1. Lao National Internet Center and the department under the Ministry of Technology and Communication;
2. The Public Relation Department under the Prime Minister's Office;
3. Press Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
4. Ministry of National Defense; and
5. Ministry of Public Security.

In accordance with the engagement with the above said line authorities concerned and external organizations in preventing and combating fake news,

misinformation and disinformation, we organized several activities these include:

1. The Workshop on the Revision of Media Ethic and children Guidelines was held on 19th – 24th January 2021 in Vientiane Province;
2. The Seminar on Fake News Checking was virtually held in Vientiane Capital from 14-24 March 2022;
3. Media Participation in promoting Nutrition and National Information Platforms for Nutrition organized between 20-25 September 2022, Savannakhet.

Lao PDF would enhance the cooperation in creating more projects and activities of ASEAN and Dialogue Partners in the field of Anti-Fake News to ensure collaboration and greater resilience against all forms of cyber and information threats and terrorism that may arise in the region.



MALAYSIA CASE STUDY

The spread of false information is not a new phenomenon, and now, the affordances of social media platforms have vastly increased the speed, depth, and precision of the dissemination efforts. Vulnerabilities in terms of an increase in mis/disinformation seeking to exploit racial and religious tensions as well as to distribute infodemic are among many other issues that need to be addressed. Further to that, if the information environment were to continue to be polluted with mis/disinformation, it would mean an erosion of society's ability to engage in productive discourse that is critical to any healthy democracy.

Hence, there is a significant need for the Malaysian Government to combat the growing impacts of information disorder while simultaneously ensuring freedom of speech (guaranteed under the Federal Constitution) is protected. Interventions and messages must be judiciously crafted based on accurate information and solid evidence. From the government's perspective, there are two main overarching challenges in this matter:

1. the need to manage the creation and dissemination of trusted information so that it is not excessive, overwhelming, or confusing; and
2. the need to counter misinformation.

Government agencies are working together across borders to share the organization's portfolio of actions to resolve specific issues. The Malaysian government has developed a range of policies, standards, and guidelines in reference to government agencies in implementing the Whole of Government. The process starts with proactive content monitoring by all the Ministries and law enforcement agencies. The coordination task force will refer all potential fake news and disinformation to the relevant Ministries and/or law enforcement agencies for review and action. Based on the assessment, the respective Ministries and/or law enforcement agencies will issue public statements explaining, clarifying, and/or refuting any false and misleading news content. Enforcement actions may be taken by the respective law enforcement agencies (Royal Malaysian Police, MCMC) based on violation of the relevant local laws.

The procedure starts with the establishment of content monitoring networks

across all government Ministries and agencies, as well as the law enforcement agencies in proactively getting ahead of the news cycle and detect content that could possibly be fake news and disinformation, as well as content that is inclined to be fake news and disinformation, which could mislead the public. Subsequently, the respective government agencies will issue public statements explaining, clarifying, or refuting any false or misleading news.

Malaysia has five strategies for combating fake news and disinformation in the media. The first strategy is to fight information with information (Strategic communications). The Malaysian government's official spokespersons are the Prime Minister as well as the Ministers based on the specific issues related to their respective purviews. Therefore, should we come across any false or inaccurate news, the acknowledgment, clarifying and debunking activities will be implemented by the spokespersons, whether via press conferences or public statements via mainstream media and official verified social media channels. Like other ASEAN Member States (AMS), the Malaysian government is also currently leveraging the most used social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter as information distribution channels to the public. The Government of Malaysia via all the Ministries will continue using every available method to communicate with the people. The objective is to provide truthful, credible, and accurate information to the public.

The second strategy is fact-checking networks. In a climate where sharing fake news has become commonplace, it is more important than ever to rely on trustworthy and strong-willed fact-checking services to vet information. That is where *Sebenarnya.my* (or in English, actually or factually) and *MyCheck Malaysia* have been put into place. With *Sebenarnya.my* in place, the Government is providing a platform for the users to check any unverified content that they received and to channel or share unverified news to the Portal, for the Portal to verify its accuracy with the respective agencies who have jurisdictions over the specific issue. Additionally, *MyCheck Malaysia*, an editorially independent fact-checking website with minimal supervision, have been established in March 2020. This fact-checking initiative by the Malaysian News Agency (known as BERNAMA), is based on their efforts to combat fake news and misinformation by producing reliable and factual news, within the guidelines of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) standards.

The third strategy is inter-agency coordination. Two committees were established for inter-agency coordination in the management of unverified news online. Currently, the Ministries or Government agencies are playing an active role in detecting and monitoring the spread of fake news involving matters within the scope of their subject matter and jurisdiction. The government of Malaysia

is also working with Government-Linked Companies (GLCs) and Government-Linked Investment Companies (GLICs) if there is any unverified news related to them. Subsequently, they will issue public statements explaining, clarifying, or refuting any false or misleading news. The statements will then be quoted and published in the Sebenarnya.my portal.

The fourth strategy is cross-functional collaboration. Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) is also working with the tech companies like Meta and Google for content enforcement. So far, tech companies are committed to reducing the spread of false news:

1. the companies remove fake accounts/news with elements of credible harm/violence and disrupt economic incentives for people that share misinformation;
2. MCMC are also working with independent third-party fact-checkers, where stories rated as false are shown lower in News Feed;
3. MCMC are also working with independent third-party fact checkers in eradicating coordinated inauthentic behavior in the platforms, which could also be a source for fake news.

Malaysia's success rate in getting their cooperation has increased over years. There is always room for improvement. While the government wants people to be connected, the government is working together for the same mission – to make the Internet a safe place. Malaysia is also working with a foreign-based fact-checking network (for instance with MAFINDO in Indonesia) for capacity building, to learn from each other, and especially to find the best methods in providing accurate information to the public, interactively.

The fifth strategy is legislation and law enforcement. Existing law provisions such as the Penal Code (Act 574) and the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (Act 588) are among the legal instruments used in regulating the publication or transmission of false content. Section 505 of the Penal Code makes it a criminal offense for whoever makes, publishes, or circulates any statement, rumor, or report, with intent to cause, or which is likely to cause, fear or alarm to the public, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to two years or with fine or with both. While Section 233 of the CMA makes the "improper use of network facilities or network services" a criminal offense, focusing on the creation or dissemination of content which is false in nature, with the intent to annoy, abuse, threaten and harass others.

In addition, Sebenarnya.my has been created for the Government to provide a platform for the users to check any unverified content that they received and

to channel or share unverified news to the Portal, for the Portal to verify its accuracy with the respective agencies who have jurisdictions over the specific issue. Additionally, MyCheck Malaysia, an editorially independent fact-checking website with minimal supervision, have been established in March 2020. This fact-checking initiative by the Malaysian News Agency (known as BERNAMA), is based on their efforts to combat fake news and misinformation by producing reliable and factual news, within the guidelines of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) standards. Apart from these, the local news portals also have their initiatives, for instance, a specific tab in their portals to provide accurate information to their readers.

The campaign in combating Fake News by MCMC has involved content push on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. The main goal of this campaign is to increase awareness of how to spot fake news and remind the public to be more mindful when sharing news on social media. Hence, the measurement of the campaign is based on the matrix such as the number of reach or impressions, engagement, likes, and others. MCMC conducts the media and literacy initiatives through the implementations of “Klik dengan Bijak” (Click Wisely); an awareness and advocacy initiative and Malaysia ICT Volunteers which an empowerment initiative to enhance digital literacy and promote digital citizenship among Malaysians.

MCMC implemented these initiatives at a federal and national level supported by all MCMC State Offices nationwide at the state level, Community Digital Economy Centre (PEDI); while the Malaysia ICT Volunteers implemented their initiatives at various community platform. Additionally, MCMC has been collaborating with relevant Ministries/ Agencies/NGOs/ Institutes of Higher Learning and international organization to implement these initiatives. MCMC is in constant engagement with local media organizations such as BERNAMA and RTM to disseminate information and educate the public on regulatory standings pertaining to spreading misinformation on social media platforms and fake news. To further educate the people on this, MCMC has also organized a Senior Editors Briefing, ‘An Afternoon with MCMC Chairman’ which involved more than 20 local media organizations to discuss and address the issues of fake news and scam in the country.

MCMC has also provided media Q&A in response to media organizations on questions concerning fake news. This is a constant effort in engaging audiences via media houses to raise awareness on always validating the news and looking for reputable news sources for information. A total of eight (8) media interviews pertaining to fake news were conducted for the whole of 2022. Most of the interviews conducted were with the radio and TV stations as well as local news

portals. Topics discussed ranged from the current state of fake news in the country, the impact of fake news on the people and the country as well as the role of the *Sebenarnya.my* portal in combating fake news. Internal stakeholders which consist of the respective senior head division/department of the user departments were featured in the interview session aimed to create awareness among the people and their role in helping the authorities to tackle the problem.

In addition to the above, the role of the fact-checking portal *sebenarnya.my*, as part of the campaign against fake news, is to increase digital literacy by promoting a culture of checking for facts, not relying on a single source of information, and obtaining information from credible sources. A fast-response taskforce has also been created by the Ministry of Communications and Digital comprising other Ministries and key agencies, with the objective of getting ahead of the news cycle, and working collaboratively together to produce counter-narrative of false news, to provide truthful and accurate information to the public. While the task force has initially being established during the COVID-19 pandemic (focusing on COVID-19-related fake news), it is now being extended to include all issues.

The Malaysian government has established a one-stop center for the public to get information related to the government at <https://www.malaysia.gov.my/>. Counter-messaging activities are done with strong, reliable, and credible government information: (1) via press statements (speech); (2) via press releases (to the mainstream media outlets); (3) via social media (official pages on FB, Twitter, Instagram); and (4) via fact-check portals i.e., *Sebenarnya.my* and *MyCheck*.

Through "Klik dengan Bijak" (Click Wisely) and Malaysia ICT Volunteer initiatives, MCMC organizes talks online, offline (face to face) and hybrid campaigns on "Freedom of speech is not Freedom to Lie" and has organized competitions (digital posters and videos on combatting fake news). Besides that, the content also postings on KDB and MIV social media accounts (KDB & MIV: Facebook and Instagram) to combat fake news and disinformation information through other media platforms. Additionally, the MIV volunteers also help to advocate for their communities on the repercussions of sharing false information online as action could be taken against them under the Communications and Multimedia Act Malaysia.

Besides going through media, MCMC is also raising awareness on fake news through awareness programs and engagement sessions "dos" and "don'ts" when they are on social media, and providing best practices in handling fake news and misinformation. The engagement sessions were done in intellectual forums, talks, as well as in other informal/formal discussions.



MYANMAR CASE STUDY

In recent years, Myanmar has faced a significant challenge in combating fake news. The spread of misinformation has been fueled by social media platforms, where false and often malicious information can spread rapidly, leading to a range of harmful consequences such as public panic, unrest, and in extreme cases, violence.

To combat the spread of fake news in Myanmar, there are several key strategies to be employed. The first is to increase media literacy among the population. By providing education on how to evaluate sources of information and fact-checking techniques, individuals can become more discerning consumers of news and better equipped to identify fake news. While respective departments under the Ministry of Information have been conducting MIL awareness educating programs to different communities across the country, the UNESCO Myanmar Office provided MIL curriculums for the Basic Education Teacher trainees of the Ministry of Education to be able to teach and share to the students of secondary to higher education level as one of the academic subjects.

Another approach is to promote responsible journalism through professional training and regulation. Journalists can be trained on fact-checking and ethical reporting practices, and regulations can be put in place to hold media outlets accountable for the accuracy and veracity of their reporting.

In addition, social media platforms can play a critical role in combating fake news in Myanmar. Platforms like Facebook, which has a significant user base in Myanmar, should have taken steps to reduce the spread of false information. For example, Facebook has announced that it has been implementing fact-checking mechanisms and algorithms to identify and remove false content. But, in reality, Facebook Myanmar Team, comprised and influenced by the Myanmar anti-government political activists abroad and exiled agencies based outside the country, intentionally take down all the information posted by the pro-government media agencies. Political bias can be vividly seen in the decision-making process of Facebook Myanmar Team. The worst is that it allows the posts of promoting terrorism and false information of so-called PDF terrorist groups and exile media agencies. That's why, the official media agencies and the public are now using some other alternative social media platform such as

Telegram to consume more balanced information.

Finally, it is important to encourage open dialogue and promote diverse perspectives in public discourse. By promoting a culture of civil debate and encouraging dialogue across political, social, and religious lines, individuals can develop a more nuanced and accurate understanding of the issues facing the country. While combating fake news in Myanmar is a complex and multifaceted challenge, by employing these strategies and working together across different sectors of society, it is possible to promote a more informed, responsible, and peaceful society.

In Myanmar, government information is very reliable. There is no norm nor guideline to empower, prevent and protect the citizen from fake news and disinformation In order to combat fake news:

1. Departmental Spokespersons are designated to timely answer the queries raised by journalists;
2. An official Telegram Channel is created by the government agencies and public and private journalists to disseminate correct news;
3. Strong, reliable, and credible government information are released regularly through government news agencies and departmental websites, social media pages;
4. Regular Press briefings are being conducted once a month by the Information Team of State Administration Council Government;
5. Information Team of State Administration Council Government has been broadcasting the implementations of government and correct news timely to the people through new media platforms;
6. Government's information and data are shared on different social media platforms and groups created by the Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) offices at States, Regions, Districts and Townships levels;
7. New streaming platforms. For Myanmar People within and outside the country, a streaming platform named mTube Video sharing and Live Streaming Platform has been created by the Ministry of Information to enhance widely spread of the true news and to get access to information to local and international communities about the current situation in Myanmar;
8. Public Awareness and Training. Necessary training programs including

media and information literacy training, cyber wellness workshops for the youth, cyber security workshops, digital web-portal training, news reporting training, and photos and video editing training are being conducted for the youth. Awareness articles about hate speech, fake news, Facebook community standard, and ethics of social media are being published. So also, MIL awareness programs are being conducted utilizing billboards, roadshows and pamphlets.

Information and Public Relations Department offices at different Regions and States have created social media pages for their relevant communities and, from which, share the right information in time. Seminars or workshops on Fake News are being conducted locally. A special Programme titled "Right Information For the People" is being broadcasted by the government TV channels.

It is true that despite efforts to combat fake news and disinformation, there are still cases of such content continuing on platforms like Facebook. The spread of misinformation and hate speech on Facebook has led to a rise in political unrest and violence in Myanmar. The users still believe that the news and information on Facebook are true, unable to verify whether there has been bias or intentionally created. Misinformation is intentionally created and shared to deceive or manipulate users, making it difficult to completely eliminate its presence on social media platforms.

Facebook has faced criticism for not doing enough to prevent the spread of hate speech and misinformation on its platform. The company has since taken steps to address the issue such as increasing the number of content moderators and partnering with fact-checking organizations. However, the damage has already been done and the consequences of the spread of misinformation on social media continue to be felt in Myanmar. The spread of disinformation, malinformation, and biased content is a complex issue, and addressing it requires a multifaceted approach involving platform policies, user education, fact-checking organizations, and collaboration between various stakeholders. It is a reminder of the power of social media and the responsibility that technology companies have to ensure the safety and well-being of their users especially in regions where the stakes are high.



PHILIPPINES CASE STUDY

The Presidential Communications Office (formerly Office of the Press Secretary/PCO/OPS) is still in the process of institutionalizing its process (finetuning) for fighting fake news and disinformation. The first step under this new administration was its push for the One Messaging Policy which aims to harmonize government messaging to ensure that the right information will reach the public. Under this, the PCO/OPS regularly coordinates with other government agencies for the vetting and dissemination of their press releases and other information for public consumption. Among the dissemination channels is the regular press briefing by the Press Secretary.

Media monitoring and social listening are also being conducted by some government offices to not only check on relevant issues and concerns but also spot possible disinformation that needs to be addressed.

In the Philippines, there are third-party checkers outside the government, mostly private media organizations, who have taken initiative to do their own fact-checking. Examples are Rappler's Fact Check, VERA Files' Fact Check, Fact Check Philippines, and Tsek.ph which was activated for the 2022 presidential elections.

As part of the ASEAN-Japan Media and Information Literacy Project, the Philippines created @cyberREADIPH on Facebook. Offline activities were also held to further the promotion of media and information literacy under this campaign. A media launch was held on November 2019 and was attended by at least 30 private media practitioners and relevant bloggers, which resulted in the airing/publication of the campaign in at least two national TV stations, four national newspapers, and twenty (20) blogs and websites. Regional launches and forums/caravans participated in by students, youth leaders, and campus journalists were also held. Aside from social media, #cyberREADI was a topic of several radio news/interviews. The Philippine campaign concluded with the #cyberREADI short video contest on Facebook where youth participants tackled the overarching theme/idea "#cyberREADI: The Role of the Filipino Youth in Cyber Wellness in the time of COVID-19" In 2022, the Philippines also conducted a short video contest on countering the infodemic as part of the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Information's RISE ASEAN project which

aims to highlight the importance of communicating the right information and the negative impact of disinformation amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Media and information literacy is part of the K-to-12 curriculum for senior high schools in the Philippines. MIL is an integral core subject for Grade 11 or 12 students. The subject aims to introduce the students to a basic understanding and preview of media and information as a platform or channel of communication. In addition, the program aims to help young learners be creative and responsible users and producers of media platforms. In the curriculum guide (CG) released by the Department of Education, 17 topics on MIL are the following: Introduction to Media and Information Literacy, The Evolution of Traditional to New Media, Information Literacy, Types of Media, Media and Information Sources, Media, and information Language, Legal, Ethical, and Societal Issues in Media and Information, Opportunities, Challenges, and Power of Media, and Information, Current and Future Trends of Media and Information, Media and Information Literate individual, People Media, Text Information and Media, Visual Information and Media, Audio Information and Media, Motion Information and Media, Manipulative Information and Media, and Multimedia Information and Media.



SINGAPORE CASE STUDY

Singapore currently has in place the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulations Act (POFMA). POFMA came into force on 2 Oct 2019 and is the result of extensive public consultation via a Green Paper, and public hearings by a Parliamentary Select Committee on Deliberate Online Falsehoods. POFMA is designed for the Internet age and is calibrated to tackle the spread of online falsehoods. In order for POFMA to apply, two legal requirements must be met – (1) there is a factual falsehood, and (2) it is in the public interest to use POFMA. POFMA primarily relies on corrections. Correction Directions (CDs) require the facts to be juxtaposed against the falsehoods. The public can read both and make up their own minds on the issues. For the most egregious cases, POFMA also allows Singapore's government to issue disabling directions and account restriction directions, to restrict access to the falsehoods by Singapore users.

POFMA is used judiciously. It is not Singapore's primary, and certainly not the only effort to combat falsehoods. There continues to be broader public communication efforts to clarify or rebut inaccurate information, through a wide variety of channels and languages. In addition, Singapore has in place the Foreign Interference (Countermeasures) Act (FICA) which aims to prevent, detect and disrupt foreign interference (FI) in domestic politics through hostile information campaigns (HICs) and the use of local proxies.

The Singapore Government has put in place programs and resources that impart digital media, information literacy, and cybersecurity skills, to equip Singaporeans to go online safely, securely and safeguard themselves against online harms and threats such as misinformation. These include the National Library Board (NLB)'s flagship information literacy program, S.U.R.E. (Source, Understand, Research, Evaluate), which was launched in 2013 to equip Singaporeans to think critically, become responsible consumers and producers of information and to stay safe and well online. The program also educates the public on the threats that deliberate online falsehoods pose. Over the past 9 years, S.U.R.E has conducted more than 6.6 million physical and digital engagements through programs, school, and community outreach, as well as through the S.U.R.E website. A study by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) on Singaporeans and false information

found that the S.U.R.E. framework was generally well-received by respondents for being clear, easy to understand, systematic and well-substantiated. It also found that the efficacy of the framework is influenced by demographic factors. These include age, education, and socio-economic background. Those with tertiary education and from higher socio-economic backgrounds performed better at accurately recalling information about S.U.R.E., whereas seniors performed poorly at recalling the framework's lessons.

The Media Literacy Council (MLC) works in partnership with the industry, community, and government to champion public education programs and programs relating to media literacy and cyber wellness. In an increasingly participatory media and digital landscape, the Council seeks to cultivate and encourage the public to become discerning media consumers with the ability to evaluate media content effectively, use, create, and share content safely, and responsibly.

In Singapore, there are two separate regimes for personal data protection. The Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) governs the use of personal data by the private sector, while Singapore public agencies are subject to the requirements of the Public Sector (Governance) Act (PSGA). The PSGA criminalizes misuse or unauthorized disclosure of data by public officers. In addition, Singapore public agencies are also subject to internal requirements under the Government Instruction Manuals (IMs), Circulars, and Circular Minutes. There are specific requirements that apply to the areas of data security (i.e., preventing loss or leak of personal information) as well as personal data protection (i.e. ensuring individuals' data is used in a responsible manner). For examples of data security requirements, Singapore refers to the Public Sector Data Security Review Committee (PSDSRC) report. In addition to personal data protection requirements, Singapore refers to the publicly available requirements on the Smart Nation website.



THAILAND CASE STUDY

Thailand has established a coordinating center to prevent, suppress, and solve the problem of spreading fake news: the Anti-Fake News Center. The Anti-Fake News Center has a committee consisting of representatives from the Association of Television Journalists, radio reporters, civil society, and academics. The working process of the Anti-Fake News Center is to “Monitor, Consider, and Correct” suspicious news on online media. The Anti-Fake News Center applies two (2) ways to examine news stories: (1) having people send it suspicious news, and (2) using the “Social Listening” system: an AI system that detects the news published on social media. In addition, according to the “Fake News Criteria Agreement,” the first step is “People inform the suspicious news to the officer through the official online channels, which include the website, Line Official, Facebook, and Twitter.” The second step is “The officer will classify the news into four (4) groups according to the ‘Fake News Criteria Agreement’; the groups include Disaster News, Economic News, Product and Health News, Government Policy and National Security News.” In the third step, “If the news is judged to be fake news, the officer will send the case to the relevant department. Then, the department will investigate the story and consider if it is fake news or not.” The next step is “Inform the officer of the final result.” After getting the final result, the officer will post the result through the official online channels and people can check the case result anytime they want. Also, the officer is required to ask permission from the case owner first before sharing the case with the public. However, in the case of fake news, the officer will coordinate with the “Police Cyber Task Force.” The first step is to monitor and analyze the suspected case. Second, the investigator has the authority to warn offenders and suspend or force them to correct the fake news. And in another case, the officer gets a report about the offense from the complainant. The officer submits a request for a search warrant to the court. Then, the officer will go over to the offender’s accommodation or office and take any illegal equipment, and if the search reveals evidence of a crime, the offender will be arrested and sent to the process of litigation.

According to the International Policy Standard, the Anti-Fake News Center has analyzed the data and information based on this standard. It has been accepted

and used by many global companies, such as Facebook (called “Community Standard”) and YouTube (called “Community Guideline”). Therefore, as Thailand continues practicing and working based on the international standard, the Anti-Fake News Center can post and share information easily on international channels, such as Facebook and YouTube, to share facts about fake news stories immediately and eliminate them effectively. Thailand also provides the “Official Website called Anti-Fake News Center Thailand,” which was established by the integration of three (3) sectors – the government sector, the private sector, and the people – in order to share information effectively.

The policy of the Anti-Fake News Center is to examine, analyze, and receive complaints about news on social trends through our official channels, including our website, Facebook, and Line Official. There are several steps in processing the information, described below. Firstly, the officer will screen the case to see if it qualifies under the Criteria Agreement. If it is the case, it will be sent to the relevant department for investigation. After the government receives the result, the officer will process the next step, warning or sharing the correct information with the public immediately through our channels, which include mass communication, government network, the private sector, and the general public. The Anti-Fake News Center has activities for creating awareness and dealing with fake news for the government and private sector. In the year 2022, the Center organized this activity in 12 provinces. This year (2023), the Center will be organizing activities to create awareness about recognizing and dealing with fake news for elementary and high school students in four (4) provinces.

To prevent, suppress, and solve the problem of spreading fake news on social media, the Center has three (3) levels of coordination, by taking a whole-of-government approach: the Central Coordination Center, the Ministry Coordination Center, and the Provincial Coordination Center. At the Central Coordination Center, which has been established by the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, the Center has the authority to coordinate with the Ministry Coordination Center and the Provincial Coordination Center. For the purpose of law enforcement against offenders, the Central Coordinating Center uses public relations (providing the facts about fake news) and creates a network of volunteers to monitor news on social media. At the Ministry Coordination Center, which has the authority to receive suspicious stories for investigation and clarification, an investigating officer will be appointed by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society. The Ministry Coordination Center is also authorized to do public relations (for example by providing the facts about fake news) and to bring in law enforcement to deal with offenders. Finally, at the Provincial Coordination

Center, the Vice Governor is the head of the center. The Center has the authority to receive suspicious news stories for investigation and clarification, and then it may proceed in accordance with the relevant laws.

If any person would like to get in touch with the Anti-Fake News Center, in order to inform our officers about suspicious stories, or simply stay up to date and be aware of false information or fake news that has been shared on social media, Thailand's government has many online official channels, shown below:

- Line Official: @antifakenewscenter
- Website: <https://www.antifakenewscenter.com/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AFNCThailand>
- TikTok: @antifakenewscenter
- Application "PaoTang" (banking and finance news only).

Regarding the government's policy on information management, the Government Public Relations Department (PRD Thailand) has a mechanism for countering fake news by first confirming whether any suspicious news and information is true or fake and then publishing the confirmed result to the public. This mechanism is operated by the National News Bureau of Thailand (NNT), which is a unit under PRD, and it coordinates with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society and other related agencies. To get in touch with the system for countering fake news, people may contact NNT about suspicious news by sending the news to NNT via various channels, such as Facebook "Real News Thailand," regional PRD offices, community radio, village health volunteers, and village PR volunteers. Then NNT will check the news to see whether it is true or fake, by checking old news or coordinating with the Information Operations Working Group in six areas: Social, Security, Economy, Government Administration, Foreign Affairs, and Justice. After receiving a confirmed result, the NNT will create news releases to publish it accordingly and report back to the inquirer.

Moreover, as PRD Thailand has always placed importance on the issues of fake news, disinformation, and media literacy, PRD has organized many activities to develop media literacy and build the public's capacity for battling fake news. First, the Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Promotion Activity was held by the National News Bureau of Thailand. NNT held a Workshop on MIL Thinking and Analysis Enhancement on 8 September 2022. The workshop aimed to strengthen knowledge and understanding of digital technology and its impacts

and enhance MIL thinking and analyzing skills for youth by providing information on social media, holding group discussions on how to check fake news, and learning from fake news and MIL case studies. Second, RISE ASEAN was held in January-March 2023 by PRD. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose challenges across the ASEAN region, the spread of fake news and false information is only making matters worse. In response to this issue, ASEAN Member States came together to launch a short video contest with the theme "RISE ASEAN: Countering the Infodemic." At the national level, PRD Thailand held a contest targeting youth aged 16-25, and called for a 1-minute video that addressed the dangers of fake news and false information related to public health and safety, as well as the importance of accurate information in ASEAN's response to COVID-19. Three winning entries were selected, primarily promoted through social media, and the videos were shared among ASEAN Member States for further dissemination. Third, the Youth Speech Contest on Digital Media and Information Literacy in ASEAN will be held by PRD Thailand. It will organize a Youth Speech Contest in the field of digital media and information literacy, with the aim of creating a better understanding and capacity for digital media literacy among Thai youths. The project targets Thai youths nationwide. It consists of various activities, including training by experts and speech competitions.



VIET NAM CASE STUDY

Viet Nam has (1) National Cyber Security Center (NCSC) under the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) to monitor, scan, detect and provide warning of disinformation and fake news; (2) Anti Fake News Center under the MIC to receive reports, tackle, verify and report disinformation and fake news to the public; (3) Fact-check column by mainstream media; and (4) Partnerships with social media platforms.

Viet Nam establishes the Digital Community Taskforce (T63) initiated by the Ministry of Information and Communications to provide support and capacity building on digital literacy and skills to the community (as of October 2022 there are more than 280.000 members in the whole country). The Campaign of launching a Handbook on recognizing and responding to Fake news and misinformation in cyberspace. There are also campaigns and infographics on the guideline for recognizing fake news and false information.

In terms of data management and creating counter-narrative for developing strong, reliable and credible government information, Viet Nam has:

1. a Decree No. 09/2017/ND-CP dated February 09, 2017 of the Government on detailing the making of statements and provision of information by state administrative agencies to the press;
2. Mainstream national media to: Publication of official views of the State on current affairs; redirect information that is not in line with national interests; objection and correction of false information; when necessary to issue a statement refuting the information intended to be misleading;
3. Fan page Thông tin Chính phủ on Facebook: to provide timely and official information from the government;
4. The Daily Livestream Program, namely: "People ask – the City answers" to connect directly the leaders of HoChiMinh City with the City's people in daily dialogues to provide official information, update instructions of the City, promptly response and verify disinformation, fake news in the period of strictly quarantine by COVID-19 pandemic in HoChiMinh City.

Viet Nam through MIC establishes the National Code of Conduct for Behaviors on Social Media (2021) The conduct consists of

1. Code of conduct for organizations and individuals;
2. Code of conduct for civil servants in state agencies; and
3. Code of conduct for state agencies. Another Ministry such as Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism has rules of behavior of artists.



ONE VISION
ONE IDENTITY
ONE COMMUNITY

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia.

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