

# Credocast

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## Global Movements

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## Social Issues

*Communications has continued to play a significant role in countering certain norms and practices that are damaging to society.*

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## Campaigning for Impact

*Platforms like Facebook, Telegram and WhatsApp connect individuals to advocate change in society through the dissemination of social change messaging within shared networks.*

## About Credo Advisory

Credo Advisory is a strategic communications firm that specializes in designing and implementing strategic, operational and tactical communication initiatives. We provide a full suite of communications support to our clients, which include public communications and advocacy, government relations, community engagement, media relations, crisis communications, digital communications and capacity building.

Our mission is to develop bespoke communications products, activities and campaigns based on knowledge, research and industry insights. With our ability to communicate effectively with diverse audiences and stakeholder groups, Credo's mission is to provide impactful strategic communications advisory from inception to implementation. At Credo, we are committed to improving the way societies communicate.

[www.creadoconsulting.com](http://www.creadoconsulting.com)





*“Movements like the abolition of slavery, civil rights, feminism and LGBTQ rights are examples of long-term social changes that have made and are still making huge impacts in the society.”*

## Global Movements

Social change is any significant transformation that results in the alteration of an existing social order, cultural values and norms, which translates to an increased behavioural change, to ensure peaceful coexistence.<sup>1</sup> In general, the notion of social progress or socio-cultural evolution is the long-term impact of social movements. These social movements are vehicles that foster change in communities, nations and the world at large. They create avenues “where people come together to raise awareness about perceived injustices and, ultimately, create change in their lives.”<sup>2</sup> Movements like the abolition of slavery, civil rights, feminism and LGBTQ+ rights are examples of long-term social changes that have made and are still making huge impact in the society.<sup>3</sup> No matter the resistance, social change is constant and strategic communications is at the heart of all movements to achieve behavioural change.

This thought piece highlights social change issues across the world and how different forms of communication strategies and tools can be used to bring about transformation.



## Communicating Social Change

Communication for social change takes a variety of communications approach. It entails using advocacy and dialogue to educate people in the grassroots about a particular social issue. Strategic use of print materials, community discussions, advocacy and social mobilization can systematically bring about change in the society.<sup>4</sup> Through the right media channels and tactical messaging tailored to address the social issue, change in attitudes and behaviour in individuals and communities occur.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/study-guides/sociology/social-change-and-movements/social-change-defined>

<sup>2</sup> Deborah Spector, Importance of Communication to Social Movements and Social Change. Available at <https://charitychannel.com/communication-social-movements-social-change/>

<sup>3</sup> Social Change Defined. Available at <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/study-guides/sociology/social-change-and-movements/social-change-defined>

<sup>4</sup> Social Change Communication. Available at [https://www.who.int/hiv/pub/toolkits/2-3a\\_SocialChangeCommunication\\_09EN.pdf](https://www.who.int/hiv/pub/toolkits/2-3a_SocialChangeCommunication_09EN.pdf)

*“To end child marriage across the globe, comprehensive and integrated public communications initiatives can be adopted by advocates through as many social systems as possible.”*

## Social Issues

### Child Marriage

Child marriage is a traditional practice in many societies that happens because of cultural and religious norms sustained through generations.<sup>5</sup> To end child marriage across the globe, comprehensive and integrated public communication initiatives can be adopted by advocates through as many social systems as possible. This will require the strategic use of public campaigns and advocacy in schools, churches and mosques, for grassroots mobilization and education. Other channels include dialogue and partnership with government and civil society organizations, in addition to tactical programming and broadcasts in traditional and new media. Public campaigns must also leverage champions and advocates at various levels of society including the government. The campaigns should focus on the benefits of an educated girl-child rather than the consequences of child brides. A consistent and effective combination of such engagement and sensitization channels can help change mindsets and, ultimately, promote behaviour change.

### Toxic Masculinity



Communications has continued to play a significant role in countering certain norms and practices that are damaging to society. Media campaigns with well-crafted messaging have been used to change narratives on societal norms that promote violence against women, based on male domination and toxic masculinity. The Gillette razor campaign “We believe: the best men can be” released in January 2019, charged men to be better men by rejecting toxic masculinity. The video received over 4 million views under 48 hours and sparked a national discourse around toxic masculinity across media platforms, companies and even among millennials.<sup>6</sup> Social media users pushed the conversation further by coming up with stories and videos of toxic masculinity that are damaging to society. This formed discussions on different radio and television programmes and effectively help re-define what masculinity should represent.

<sup>5</sup> Why does child marriage happen? Available at <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/why-does-it-happen/#targetText=Tradition,as%20a%20wife%20and%20mother>

<sup>6</sup> Gillette #MeToo razors ad on 'toxic masculinity' gets praise – and abuse. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/15/gillette-metoo-ad-on-toxic-masculinity-cuts-deep-with-mens-rights-activists>



“*Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn serve as dynamic channels to foster dialogue and accelerate social change issues.*”

## Campaigning for Impact

### Social Media Advocacy

The world is transforming through social media advocacy. Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn serve as dynamic channels to foster dialogue and accelerate social change issues. For instance, in 2013, three black community organizers in the United States started the “Black Lives Matter” campaign on Facebook to respond to the death of an unarmed 17-year-old African-American, Trayvon Martin.<sup>7</sup> The campaign adopted an array of communication initiatives ranging from protests, public dialogues, and public advocacy to creating a global awareness on the American law enforcement’s perceived discrimination against black people. This campaign continues to grow in prominence and influence. In Nigeria, some notable campaigns that have integrated effective messaging on social media to bring about public awareness and social change are #ChildNotBride which advocates for the end of child marriage, #EndSARS with the goal of curbing the excesses of trigger happy Special Anti-Robbery Squad operatives and the #EndJungleJustice campaign, following the extrajudicial killings of innocent students from the University of Port Harcourt tagged #Aluu4.

### Creative Industry as Change Agents



Music, theatre, film, among other creative art forms, mirror societal issues. They have the power to expose social issues and spark conversations surrounding polemics and foster national debates. Trevor Noah, the notable South African comedian and the anchor of “The Daily Show” - an American television programme - uses comedy to discuss social issues like racism, ethnicity, sexism, feminism, etc. with the goal of stimulating dialogue and creating awareness that will help counter destructive narratives.

<sup>7</sup> Jonadad Fequiere (2016) How Millennials use social media to make social change. Available at <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/social-media-social-change>

*“Today, change agents adapt movie scripts to mirror pertinent global social issues like racism, rape, gender-based violence and more.”*

The film industry can also influence social change especially as it relates to social norms and governance. Today, change agents adapt movie scripts and concert themes to expose pertinent global social issues like racism, rape, gender-based violence, global warming, etc. In 2013, Nollywood actress and advocate, Stephanie Okereke, produced a film called “Dry” to create awareness and communicate the dangers of child marriage which leaves the underage girls with Vesicovaginal Fistula (VVF), a growing gender based public health issue caused from bladder and vaginal damage. Also, a recent BBC Eye documentary exposed sexual harassment in universities across Nigeria and Ghana. The documentary went viral sparking a hashtag #SexforGrades, across media channels, pushing through social media chatter to advocate behaviour change in schools but importantly, raised awareness on the sexual abuse of students by university lecturers. This documentary also led to radio and television programming on sexual harassment and exploitation with many victims sharing their stories. It fostered public advocacy for an end to sexual harassment in universities.

### Public Campaigning for Impact

Public campaigns play an important role in information sharing around local or global issues. It is a combination of communication channels and products (radio, television, brochures, flyers, billboards, infographics, etc.) to create awareness and champion a cause that affects how society evolves. Channels like TV, radio, print and new media have been used to amplify and advocate for social change. During the recent xenophobic attacks on Nigerians and other foreigners living in South Africa, the Nigerian government, civil society organizations and Nigerian companies utilized an effective mix of public communication channels, tools and messaging to help mitigate the recurring violence against Nigerians. Part of the communication channels included the following:



*“Individuals, organizations and institutions must maximize communication channels such as radio, TV, digital media and participatory communication.”*

### Credo Experience

Credo Advisory lends its voice to relevant social issues as a bridge to creating awareness. In observance of Nigeria's independence day, Credo produced a video that was launched as a social media campaign themed [“Real Nigeria”](#). The goal of the campaign was to counter the negative stereotype of Nigerians as corrupt and fraudulent; by showing the real Nigerians who are industrious, innovative and creative from different sectors of life. The video was shared and promoted across Credo's social media platforms.

Also, in the Credocast September 2019 issue [‘Gender Rights’](#), Credo highlighted various communication initiatives that can promote increased female participation in male dominated fields.



## Conclusion

Social movements that facilitate social change or reforms are driven by strategic and tactical communication initiatives. It adopts a continuous and collaborative communications framework to stimulate the needed behavioural, political and social transformation. As a result, individuals, organizations and institutions must maximize communication channels such as radio, TV, digital media and participatory communication to drive social movements. Additionally, the use of relevant and intentional messaging tailored to a target audience can be used to create awareness and advocate a change in mindsets and social norms.