

Reclaiming the Narrative

Storytelling Through Social Media

Concept Note

Co-Organised by: Centre for Financial Accountability (CFA), Let India Breathe and HOPE

Dates: 24 – 26 June 2026

Location: Pune

Target Group: CSO professionals, activists, journalists, media practitioners

Social media is a double-edged sword. The same platforms that spread misinformation, hate narratives, and divisive content at alarming speed are the very tools we are trying to use for social change. These are algorithm-driven, corporately owned spaces that shape public discourse in ways that are rarely visible and almost never neutral. For CSO people, activists, and journalists, understanding this terrain is no longer optional, it is fundamental to doing the work.

The workshop will cover the political and strategic dimensions of social media storytelling. Participants will develop an understanding of why building an intentional perspective on social media is urgent for civil society, how these algorithm-driven, corporately owned platforms shape public discourse, amplify misinformation, and why those of us working for social change need to navigate this terrain with clarity. This will be grounded in a broader political understanding of the development sector, who holds power, who funds the work, and how dominant narratives are built and sustained. Participants will also work on developing counter narratives rooted in evidence and lived experience, and learn how to map stakeholders and power structures to identify where narrative intervention can have the most impact.

Participants will gain perspectives on and hands-on tools and techniques for using multiple social media platforms, understanding how each platform works, what formats and storytelling approaches work best where, and how to write, design, and produce video content for each. They will develop a working sense of how to build a campaign narrative with the resources they actually have. The workshop will also cover research and verification, and how to engage mainstream media and build networks that extend beyond social media reach. Woven through the three days will be brief but important conversations on the health of the organisations and movements doing this work, documentation, digital safety, shared leadership, and mental health awareness, because sustainable storytelling requires sustainable people and collectives.

By the end of the three days, participants should be able to navigate social media with greater political clarity, produce stories that are compelling and credible, and connect their communications work to broader campaign and movement goals.

Outcomes

By the end of the three days, participants will be able to:

- Navigate social media with greater political clarity, understanding how platforms work, who owns them, and how they shape what gets seen and heard
- Produce stories that are compelling, credible, and rooted in evidence and lived experience
- Develop and deploy counter narratives that challenge dominant discourse
- Map stakeholders and power structures to identify where narrative intervention has the most impact
- Use multiple platforms with confidence, knowing what formats, approaches, and content work where
- Write, design, and produce video content suited to each platform
- Build a campaign narrative using the resources they actually have
- Engage mainstream media and build networks that extend the reach of their work beyond social media
- Connect their communications work to broader campaign and movement goals