



# Empower & Lead

**A Guide For Women in Politics and the Media  
On Using the Media Safely and Effectively**

**Combating Violence Against Women in Politics and Media**

A NDI and IWMF Program



NATIONAL  
DEMOCRATIC  
INSTITUTE



INTERNATIONAL  
WOMEN'S MEDIA  
FOUNDATION

# Contents

---

## Foreword 3

---

## Empowering Women in Politics 4

---

- Cultivating Your Personal Brand 5
- Mastering Social Media 9
- Crafting Impactful Social Media Content 12

## Journalism's Role in Elevating Women in Politics 16

---

- Specialized Reporting on Women in Elections 18
- Spotlighting Women in Politics 24
- Leveraging Social Media for Compelling Storytelling 26

## Fostering Mental Health and Resilience 28

---

- Strategies for Women in Politics and Media 29

# Acknowledgements

---

Written by: Paula Fray

Designed by: Fiona Peake

This guide was developed as part of the **“Combating Violence Against Women in Politics and Media” program delivered by the International Women’s Media Foundation (IWMF) and National Democratic Institute**

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI or the Institute) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that responds to the aspirations of people around the world to live in democratic societies that recognize and promote basic human rights. Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to support and strengthen democratic institutions and practices by strengthening political parties, civic organizations, and parliaments; safeguarding elections; and promoting citizen participation, openness, and accountability in government. NDI is a leading organization working to advance women’s political participation around the world. The Institute empowers women to participate, compete, and lead as equal and active partners in democratic change. Mobilizing its global networks and drawing on three decades of experience in 132 countries, NDI supports women’s aspirations for gender equality in order to achieve inclusive, responsive and resilient democratic governance. NDI’s multinational approach reinforces the message that, while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies.

The International Women’s Media Foundation (IWMF) is the only global organization built to serve the holistic needs of women and nonbinary journalists. We are a bold and inclusive organization that supports journalists where they are with awards, reporting opportunities, fellowships, grants, safety training and emergency aid. As one of the largest supporters of women-produced journalism, our transformative work strengthens equal opportunity and press freedom worldwide.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. AC

# Foreword

---

Women face unique hurdles in the dynamic and often challenging world of politics and media. This guide is developed with the understanding that the intersection of gender, politics, media, and digital engagement creates a landscape that requires both resilience and strategic insight.

In the realm of politics, where the power of voice shapes the future, effective communication is not just a skill, but a necessity—especially for women, whether they are activists or elected officials. For women in politics, communication is more than the mere exchange of information; it is a powerful tool for advocacy, leadership, and change.

As women step into political roles, they often navigate a landscape marked by historical gender biases and underrepresentation. In such an environment, mastering the art of communication becomes crucial. It enables women to articulate their vision, influence policy, mobilize support, and challenge existing narratives.

For women activists, communication is the bedrock of awareness and advocacy. It's how they amplify marginalized voices, highlight critical issues, and galvanize public support. Effective communication can transform a local movement into a global conversation, bridging gaps between diverse communities and fostering solidarity.

Elected women officials, on the other hand, use communication to lead and govern. It is through clear, persuasive, and impactful dialogue that they can effectively represent their constituents, negotiate in legislative arenas, and drive meaningful policy changes. Moreover, in a world increasingly dominated by digital media, mastering communication helps them

navigate both traditional and new media platforms to reach and engage with a broader audience.

Women in media face unique challenges when reporting on politics - including elections - in a gender-sensitive manner. They must navigate biases and stereotypes, ensuring balanced coverage of men and women standing for office. Additionally, they often confront gender-based harassment, both online and offline, which can impact their ability to report freely and fairly.

However, the significance of communication for women in politics goes beyond practical necessity. It is also symbolic. Each time a woman effectively communicates in the political sphere, it challenges stereotypes, shifts perceptions, and paves the way for greater gender equality in political representation and leadership.

In essence, for women in politics, communication is a tool of empowerment and a path to leadership. It is through their voices that new perspectives are introduced, policies are shaped, and societies are transformed. As such, honing communication skills is not just beneficial; it is fundamental for any woman seeking to make an impact in the political arena.

For women in media, reporting politics means more than simply reflecting the fullness of the political story. It means challenging perceptions on who covers politics, how these stories are reported and what impact these stories have.

Ensuring high visibility for both women in politics and media holds the promises of changing the political landscape.



***If the history of Africa was written by Africans and by women, I think we would find many unsung heroes.***

President Sahle-Work Zewde, Ethiopia



**E m p o w e r i n g**

**W o m e n i n P o l i t i c s**

# Cultivating Your Personal Brand

In the realms of politics and media, the significance of a personal brand for women cannot be overstated. For women in politics, a personal brand is more than just a mark of identity; it's a powerful tool that can break through the barriers of a traditionally male-dominated field. It helps them stand out and showcase their unique perspectives, policies, and values. This individuality is crucial in politics, where the ability to distinguish oneself can be the key to gaining support and making an impact.

For women building a brand in media, the importance of a personal brand is equally profound. In a landscape where women's voices have often been underrepresented, a strong personal brand enables women to establish themselves as authoritative, credible voices in their fields. It's not just about being seen; it's about being heard and respected for their insights and contributions.

In these highly visible and influential arenas, a personal brand is a strategic networking tool. It opens doors to new opportunities, collaborations, and alliances. It connects women with like-minded individuals and organizations, to foster relationships that are affiliated with their goals and values. It offers control over their narrative, allowing them to proactively shape their public image.

A personal brand is a platform for influence and thought leadership. Women in politics and media can use their personal brands to voice their opinions, influence public discourse, and lead conversations. This ability to influence is not just about power; it's about making meaningful contributions to society and driving change.

In terms of visibility, a strong personal brand brings recognition and respect. It can lead to speaking engagements, interviews, and other platforms where

women can showcase their expertise and insights. This visibility is crucial for building a reputation as a leader and an expert in their field.

For women entrepreneurs and freelancers in the media, a personal brand is essential for marketability. It attracts audiences, clients, and collaborators who connect with their brand's message and values.

Finally, a personal brand for women in politics and media is about legacy as it reflects their impact, not just in their immediate roles, but in the wider societal context. It's about leaving a mark that shows their contributions, their values, and their vision for the future.

## A strong personal brand supports:

1. Differentiation in a crowded public space

2. Credibility that builds trust and respect

3. Career opportunities

4. Strategic networking

5. Ownership of your public story

6. Enhanced influence

7. Visibility for your work



***We must listen to the voices that have been silenced for too long.***

Indigenous activist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Rigoberta Menchu, Guatemala

# Building Your Brand

---

As a woman in politics, you are a pioneer, charting a course in a challenging, but rewarding field. This guide is more than just a set of instructions; it's a roadmap to help you navigate the complexities of political branding with limited resources. Your personal brand is a reflection of who you are, what you stand for, and

how you wish to be perceived in the political arena.

This guide will take you through the steps of crafting a compelling narrative, being authentic in your communication, and maintaining a consistent brand image.

## 1. Clarifying Your Story

Your personal story is the foundation of your political brand. It helps constituents understand who you are and what you stand for.

### Core Values Reflection

- **What drives you?** Think about the values that you are unwilling to compromise on.
- **Personal Connection:** How do these values relate to your personal experiences?

### Personal Experiences & Political Goals:

- **Life Lessons:** Share how specific events in your life have shaped your political views.
- **Vision for the Future:** How do these experiences inform your goals as a politician?

### Creating Your Message:

- **Simplicity is Key:** Develop a succinct message that encapsulates your values and goals. This should be easy for people to remember and rally behind.

## 2. Authenticity in Your Message

Authenticity builds trust and credibility. It's about showing your constituents that you are genuine and committed.

### Staying True to Yourself

- **Unique Voice:** Reflect on how your natural communication style sets you apart.
- **Consistency:** Ensure that your public persona aligns with your true self.

### Community Engagement:

- **Visibility:** Identify opportunities for engaging with your community. This could be local events, forums, or social media discussions.
- **Active Participation:** Plan your involvement in these events, focusing on listening to and addressing community concerns.

### Real-Life Examples:

- **Relatability:** Use stories from your life or your community to make complex political issues more relatable.

### 3. Consistency in Your Branding

Consistent branding helps people recognize and remember you. It's about creating a cohesive image across all platforms.

#### Visual Identity:

- **Brand Aesthetics:** Choose symbols, colors, and fonts that reflect your personality and message.
- **Accessibility:** Ensure your materials are visually appealing and easy to understand.

#### Communication Plan:

- **Regular Updates:** Keep your community informed about your activities and stances on issues.
- **Diverse Platforms:** Use a mix of traditional and digital platforms to reach a wider audience.

#### Reinforcing Your Message:

- **Message Alignment:** Make sure every communication reinforces your core message and values.



### CASE STUDY: Resilience paves the path for Liberian women politicians

Regina Walker's story is one of resilience and perseverance, a testament to her unwavering commitment to serving her community. Walker was born in Grand Kru County, Liberia, and faced considerable challenges in her political journey.

Grand Kru County was established in 1984, and was barely developed before the Liberian Civil War began in 1989. This conflict further impeded the county's progress, especially due to poor infrastructure and inaccessible roads.

Despite these adversities, Walker was driven by a passion to serve her people. Her career initially spanned various roles at international organizations but she always had a desire to directly impact her community. This aspiration led her to politics, drawing inspiration from her experience working with a Member of Parliament between 2011 and 2017.

Walker's initial foray into politics was fraught with challenges. Her attempt to run for office in 2017 in Montserrado County was thwarted during the nomination process. She faced financial constraints and the harsh realities of political competition against

established candidates. Yet, her determination remained unshaken.

Undeterred, Walker continued her efforts, campaigning in difficult terrains and using innovative methods like radio broadcasts and social media to reach her constituents.

Despite not succeeding in her 2023 electoral bid, she has remained active in her community. She is planning to establish a local NGO focused on agricultural and vocational training.

Walker's advice to young women aspiring to enter politics is profound. She emphasizes the importance of being actively engaged in the community, building a visible and impactful presence, and starting early in their political journey. Education, leadership skills, and financial independence are critical, and so is the ability to navigate the complex dynamics of politics.

Above all, Walker's journey highlights the importance of resilience. She believes that setbacks should not deter one from their path but rather serve as stepping stones to future endeavors.



***Women must get out into the community and be visible. They must be educated and get leadership skills so that they can stand in the elections."***

Politician Regina Walker, Liberia

# Brand and Message Development



**Step 1:** Write down your core values and political goals:

<b>Core Values</b>	<b>Political Goals</b>
--------------------	------------------------

**Step 2:** Develop and write your mission statement:

<b>Mission Statement</b>
--------------------------

**Step 3:** Note down personal stories that relate to your mission:

<b>Story 1</b>	<b>Story 2</b>
----------------	----------------

**Step 4:** Design your visual identity:

<b>Logo Sketch</b>	<b>Color Scheme</b>
--------------------	---------------------

**Step 5:** Create a community engagement and update schedule:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

**Step 6:** Plan for consistent messaging across all platforms:

<b>Key Message</b>
--------------------



# Mastering Social Media

In today's digital age, a well-crafted social media strategy is essential for women in politics, particularly in regions like Africa and Latin America where resources may be limited. This guide aims to provide detailed insights into selecting the most effective platforms, crafting impactful messages, targeting specific audiences, and developing a robust social media policy - including dealing with online abuse.

## Choosing a Platform

Selecting the right social media platform depends on your audience, as it allows you to engage with them on the platforms they prefer. It ensures effective communication tailored to their needs.

## Targeting Audiences

Identifying and choosing your audience is crucial in any outreach campaign because it directly impacts the campaign's effectiveness and efficiency. Understanding your audience allows you to tailor your message, tone, and approach to resonate with their specific needs, interests, and preferences.

It starts with identifying the key demographics of your audience and then knowing and understanding their age, location, interests and online habits.

This personalization enhances engagement, increases the likelihood of a positive response, and builds trust. It also helps in resource allocation, ensuring that time and resources are directed where they are most likely to yield results. Moreover, a well-defined audience enables you to measure campaign success accurately, refine strategies based on feedback, and establish long-lasting connections with a loyal and relevant audience.

## Choosing Your Platforms

When choosing your platform, consider your audience and what their needs might be. Then think of what content - and therefore the time, effort and additional resources - you will need for their preferred platform. For example, TikTok is much more visual than X (Twitter) and will require some effort in terms of creating its videos.

## Crafting Messages

It is important to have a strong message that is concise and clear so that it is understood by a broad audience.

These messages should be authentic and reflect your true beliefs, values and personality.

Then identify how to make these messages more engaging and shareable with images, videos and infographics.

## Understanding Key Platforms

- **Facebook:** Excellent for detailed posts, community engagement, and live events. Ideal for reaching a diverse age group.
- **X (Twitter):** Suitable for quick updates, real-time engagement, and networking with influencers. Best for short, impactful messages.
- **Instagram:** Effective for visual storytelling, particularly with a younger audience. Utilize images and short videos to convey messages.
- **WhatsApp:** Direct communication with supporters; good for organizing grassroots campaigns and sharing updates with close-knit groups.
- **YouTube:** Ideal for long-form content like speeches, interviews, and detailed explanations of policies. Helps in building a more personal connection with the audience.
- **LinkedIn:** A professional networking platform; excellent for connecting with other leaders, professionals, and policy influencers.
- **TikTok:** Trendy among the younger demographic. Use short, engaging videos to convey messages in a creative and relatable way.



# Excercise

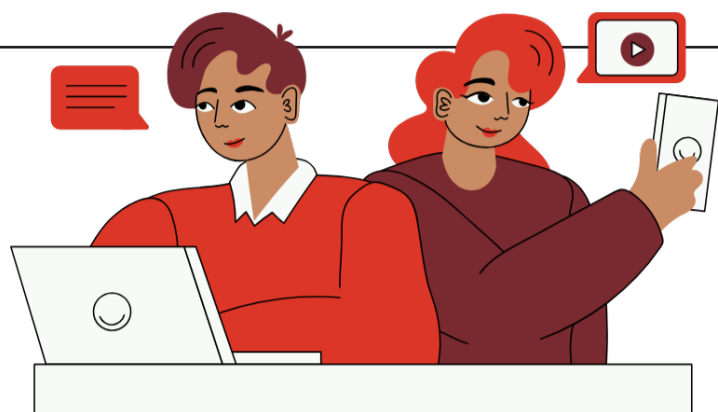


Identify your campaign messages here. Ask yourself: Are my messages concise and clear?

## Content Planning

Consistency is key in social media and it is important to have a regular posting schedule. Some planning will help with this.

- 1** Start by identifying all the content you already have such as videos, posters, guides, quotes, photographs and any other items.
- 2** Now consider how you might repurpose these items into different formats.
- 3** Ensure the updates are balanced in terms of the types of content such as events, announcements, tips, personal stories, policy briefs etc.
- 4** Ensure the content is targeted at your audience and appropriate for the platform.
- 5** Encourage audience participation through polls, Q&As and discussions. Plan regular campaigns that deliver user generated content in order to increase engagement.
- 6** Elicit feedback by actively engaging with your audience to build a community and foster trust and loyalty.



# Template

## Social Media Policy Guide



### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to [Your Organization's Name] Social Media Policy Framework. This guide serves as a foundation for creating a responsible and effective social media presence while aligning with the specific needs and values of our organization.

#### Conduct Guidelines

- Clearly define the behavior expected from all team members when representing the organization on social media.
- Specify the guidelines for sharing content related to the organization's mission, vision, and values.

#### Content Standards

- Establish what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate content, considering legal and ethical standards.

#### Engagement Rules

- Detail how team members should engage with the audience, including responding to comments, questions, and handling negative feedback.

### HANDLING HARASSMENT

#### Preventive Measures

- Explain the use of available tools like blocking, muting, and comment filters to manage exposure to online abuse or violence.

#### Response Strategy

- Create a protocol for responding to online abuse, specifying when to engage, ignore, or report instances.

#### Support and Reporting

- Implement a support system within the organization to assist team members affected by online abuse.
- Establish a clear and confidential process for reporting serious cases of online abuse.

[Your Organization's Name] Social Media Policy Framework is a flexible template that can be tailored to suit the unique requirements of our organization. We encourage all team members to adhere to this policy to maintain a positive and impactful online presence.

# Crafting Impactful Social Media Content

Effective use of social media is critical for women in politics. Choosing and creating the right content can be the difference between creating real engagement and simply adding to internet noise.

This guide focuses on identifying content and creating a content calendar, particularly during political (including election) campaigns.

## Content to Consider

- **Policy Briefs:** Break down your political policies and how they benefit the community.
- **Personal Stories:** Share experiences that shaped your political views and motivations.
- **Community News:** Feature stories or achievements from your constituency.
- **Events:** Promote upcoming events and share highlights from past events.
- **Engagement:** Conduct polls, Q&As, and live sessions to engage with your audience.
- **Endorsements:** Share endorsements from local leaders or testimonials from community members to support your campaigns.
- **Volunteer Support:** Highlight the work and impact of your campaign volunteers.
- **Behind-the-Scenes:** Offer glimpses into your daily life and the workings of your campaign.
- **News and Current Events:** Provide your perspective on current events and how they relate to your campaign.
- **Infographics and Data Visualizations:** Use visuals to convey complex data or policies simply and effectively.

## Creating a Content Calendar

It is important to ensure that you have a steady stream of content. Consider:

- **Key dates:** Mark important dates in the election process on your calendar.
- **Identify themes:** Assign themes to weeks or months based on the election timeline (e.g., registration, policy focus, community engagement).
- **Frequency and Timing:** Determine how often you will post and the best times to reach your audience.
- **Platform-Specific Strategies:** Tailor content types for different platforms (e.g., more visual content for Instagram; direct communication for WhatsApp).

A well-planned social media strategy, centered around a diverse range of content, is crucial for building a strong personal brand and engaging effectively with your electorate. By following a content calendar that aligns with the election process, you can ensure consistent and impactful communication with your audience.

*To girls and women everywhere, I issue a simple invitation. My sisters, my daughters, my friends; find your voice.*

Former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia

## Examples of Content Calendar Outline Following the Election Process

Month	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
<b>Campaign Launch</b>	Policy Introduction Post	Community Highlight	Live Q&A on Policy	Volunteer Spotlight
<b>Voter Registration</b>	Information on How to Register	Personal Story on Voting Importance	Event Announcement: Registration Drive	Behind-the-Scenes: Prepping for Drive
<b>Pre-Debate</b>	Debate Topic Overview	Infographic on Key Policies	Behind-the-Scenes: Debate Prep	Live Discussion Post-Debate
<b>Pre-Election</b>	Daily Countdown with Key Policies	Endorsement Announcements	Last-Minute Voter Information	Thank You Note to Supporters



## **CASE STUDY: An Election Journey in Guatemalan Politics**

Laura Fabiola Marroquín Cordón, Congresswoman-Elect for the Central District with the Seed Caucus in Guatemala, started her political journey at the Ministry of Health (MSPAS) in Guatemala. It was here that she gained insights into public administration, the state's shortcomings in improving lives, and the pivotal role of Congress in driving significant change. This spurred her decision to actively participate in politics.

Marroquín Cordón faced considerable challenges in a male-dominated political landscape. She struggled with limited access to financial and material resources, which are predominantly controlled by men. These limitations affected her presence in decision-making circles.

Additionally, she endured political violence, societal prejudices about her youth, gender, marital status, and appearance. Media coverage was often skewed towards men in power. But, she was not deterred.

To connect with voters, especially women, Marroquín Cordón focused on grassroots efforts, engaging with women across different social and economic contexts. She also utilized social media to build relationships and engage in public conversations while mindful of the message and tone.

Social media played a crucial role in Laura's campaign, especially in reaching younger and adult demographics. It allowed her team to portray themselves as relatable individuals facing societal issues, distinguishing them as a unique proposition.

Marroquín Cordón believes in prioritizing and consistently advocating for specific causes to build a political identity. She emphasizes the need to tailor messages and tones to the intended audience.

Navigating media relations was also challenging. She advises other women to strategize on becoming recognized as credible sources for media coverage.

Marroquín Cordón highlights the importance of courage and assertiveness in campaigning. She believes in continuously fighting for space and recognition, speaking from a woman's perspective to strengthen democracy.

Marroquín Cordón urges aspiring women politicians to their indignation to motivate their action to take their seat at the table - stressing the importance of women actively contesting these spaces to shape their intentions and goals.



### ***Interventions to End Online Violence Against Women in Politics.***

<https://www.ndi.org/publications/ndi-releases-interventions-end-online-violence-against-women-politics-report>

### ***Online Violence Response Hub***

<https://onlineviolenceresponsehub.org/>

### ***A Guide to Protecting Newsrooms and Journalists Against Online Violence***

<https://www.iwmf.org/newsroom-policy-guide/>

# Template

## Example Content Calendar for Social Media Strategy



### Monthly Overview: [Example Month]

- Week 1 Focus: Introduction and Engagement
- Week 2 Focus: Policy and Advocacy
- Week 3 Focus: Community Interaction and Q&A
- Week 4 Focus: Personal Stories and Team Highlights

Week 1: Introduction and Engagement		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Platform: Facebook Content: Introduction post – personal background and political vision	Platform: Instagram Content: Image from a recent community event	Platform: X (Twitter) Content: Engage in a relevant trending topic
Week 2: Policy and Advocacy		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Platform: LinkedIn Content: Article on a key policy issue	Platform: YouTube Content: Video discussing a specific policy proposal	Platform: TikTok Content: Short, creative video highlighting a policy impact
Week 3: Community Interaction and Q&A		
Tuesday	Thursday	Saturday
Platform: WhatsApp Content: Group message soliciting questions for a Q&A	Platform: Thursday: Platform: Facebook Live Content: Live Q&A session answering community questions	Platform: Instagram Stories Content: Share highlights from the Q&A session
Week 4: Personal Stories and Team Highlight		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Platform: X (Twitter) Content: Share a personal story related to political work	Platform: Facebook Content: Highlight a team member and their contributions	Platform: LinkedIn Content: Post about the importance of teamwork in politics

### Daily Tasks

Everday:

- Check all platforms for comments and messages
- Engage with the audience by responding to comments and messages
- Monitor trending topics for potential engagement

### Notes

- **Flexibility:** Be prepared to adjust the calendar based on current events or urgent political matters.
- **Audience Engagement:** Encourage interaction through polls, questions, and calls-to-action.
- **Analytics Review:** At the end of each week, review analytics to understand audience engagement and adjust the strategy as needed.

# Template

## Example Content Calendar for Social Media Strategy



### Monthly Social Media Content Calendar

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Facebook: Introduction post – personal background and political vision		Instagram: Image from a recent community event		X (Twitter): Engage in a relevant trending topic		
2	LinkedIn: Article on a key policy issue		YouTube: Video discussing a specific policy proposal		TikTok: Short video highlighting a policy impact		
3		WhatsApp: Group message soliciting questions for a Q&A		Facebook Live: Live Q&A session answering community questions		Instagram Stories: Share highlights from the Q&A session	
4	X (Twitter): Share a personal story related to political work		Facebook: Highlight a team member and their contributions		LinkedIn: Post about the importance of teamwork in politics		

***“Fear, doubt, uncertainty, and indignation must always move us to participate and dispute spaces, having the clarity that in politics there is no empty chair and that if we are not the ones who are willing to dispute the space, someone else will.”***

Congresswoman-Elect for the Central District with the Seed Caucus, Laura Fabiola Marroquín Cordón, Guatemala





**Journalism's Role in Elevating**

**Women in Politics**



# Journalism's Role in Elevating Women in Politics

Political journalism emphasizes the representation and coverage of women and gender issues.

The way women in politics are portrayed influences public perception and can either challenge or reinforce gender stereotypes. Balanced and fair coverage can inspire more women to participate in politics, fostering a more inclusive political landscape.

Women bring unique perspectives to political discussions, addressing issues that might otherwise be overlooked. Journalism that highlights these perspectives contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of political landscapes and impacts on other women and gender diverse persons.

This benefits voters too: Effective coverage of women

and gender issues helps educate voters about the diverse range of candidates and issues, enabling a more informed electorate.

Journalism has the power to challenge systemic biases and create a more equitable platform for all candidates, regardless of gender. As society progresses towards greater gender equality, journalism needs to evolve accordingly and accurately reflect these changes in its coverage of politics.

With these considerations in mind, the following guides are designed to assist women journalists in covering women in politics, to enhance the quality of journalism and encourage better coverage of women and gender issues during election cycles.



## CASE STUDY: Coverage of Women in the Guatemalan Elections

Diana Marcella Fuentes Perez, a seasoned journalist in Guatemala, has been at the forefront of gender-sensitive reporting, particularly during the nation's elections. Her coverage has been pivotal in highlighting the unique challenges faced by women candidates and voters in Guatemala's political landscape.

Fuentes Perez identified key challenges in reporting on women in politics, including societal and media biases. Women candidates often faced criticism based on physical appearance and personal life, including marital status. Additionally, indigenous women in politics experienced heightened racism and threats from drug trafficking. Women voters also faced challenges, sometimes letting male partners speak on their behalf, although many expressed their opinions with conviction.

Fuentes Perez adopted several effective storytelling techniques:

- Created a podcast dedicated to the visibility of women politicians, offering a more digestible format for the Guatemalan audience.
- Used videos and photos to illustrate the challenges faced by women running for public office and conducting live interviews.

To maintain a gender-neutral perspective, Fuentes Perez focused her reporting on in-depth investigative journalism with a gender focus, honed over 15 years of experience.

Fuentes Perez advises aspiring journalists to be trained in journalism with a focus on gender and politics. She emphasizes the importance of resilience and building support networks with colleagues specializing in covering women in politics.

Fuentes Perez hopes for increased visibility of indigenous women politicians and the presence of women editors with a gender perspective in newsrooms for more in-depth analysis. She advocates for reporting that enables readers to make informed decisions by highlighting parity in political parties and the diverse roles of women in politics.

Fuentes Perez's approach underscores the need for comprehensive training, resilience, and the creation of support networks to effectively cover women in politics, paving the way for more inclusive and informed media coverage.

# Specialized Reporting on Women in Elections

In the search for balanced and equitable political reporting, journalists must strengthen their ability to cover women in politics effectively. This entails honing their skills, knowledge, and sensitivity to provide

fair and insightful coverage that ensures the voices and experiences of women in politics are accurately represented.

*Journalists can do so by:*

- 1 Understanding Gender Biases:** Recognize and challenge both overt and subtle gender biases in political reporting. This includes being aware of the language used to describe women politicians and the types of questions posed to them.
- 2 Focus on Policy, Not Personality:** Ensure coverage is centered around the policies, achievements, and qualifications of women in politics, rather than their personal lives, appearance, or demeanor, which are often disproportionately highlighted in the media.
- 3 Highlight Diverse Voices:** Seek out and include diverse perspectives among women in politics. This involves covering a range of political positions, backgrounds, and issues that resonate with different segments of society.
- 4 Challenge Stereotypes:** Actively work to dismantle stereotypes about women in politics by showcasing the varied roles they play and the diverse issues they champion.
- 5 Promote Gender Sensitivity in Reporting:** Be mindful of the impact of reporting on public perception and the potential for perpetuating gender norms. Use gender-sensitive language and avoid trivializing or sensationalizing women's experiences and contributions.
- 6 Educate and Engage:** Use journalism as a tool to educate the public about gender issues in politics. This includes explaining the importance of women's representation in political decision-making and the impact of policies on different genders.
- 7 Build Networks and Support Systems:** Collaborate with other women journalists and organizations which focus on gender in politics. Sharing resources, insights, and support can strengthen the overall quality and impact of journalism in this field.
- 8 Continuous Learning and Adaptation:** Stay informed about the evolving landscape of gender and politics. This involves continuous learning and adapting to new trends, research, and discourse in gender studies and political science.

By following these guidelines, women journalists can play a pivotal role in shaping a more equitable and accurate portrayal of women in politics, ultimately

contributing to a more informed and inclusive democratic process.



## **Women in the news:**

[https://www.ips.org/africa/library/publications/ips\\_the\\_women\\_in\\_the\\_news.pdf](https://www.ips.org/africa/library/publications/ips_the_women_in_the_news.pdf)



## CASE STUDY: Coverage of Women in Liberian Elections

In the 2023 Liberian elections, the coverage of women candidates was a significant challenge due to various factors including technological barriers and societal stereotypes. The CEO of Women TV Liberia, spearheaded an innovative approach to address these issues.

Diasay identified key challenges in reporting on women candidates. Many women were located in remote areas with limited internet connectivity, hindering digital access and communication. Additionally, there was a general reluctance among women to engage with the media, partly due to fear of negative portrayal and societal stereotypes.

To counter these obstacles, Diasay and her team at Women TV Liberia implemented several strategies:

- Diasay leveraged her network and proximity to women candidates, built over years of working in women's institutions, to encourage women to engage the media. This personal approach helped in gaining trust and facilitating candid discussions.
- Women TV Liberia collaborated with community radios and local media outlets to extend their reach to women candidates in remote areas, thus ensuring broader coverage.
- Recognizing the importance of digital presence, Diasay also advocated for a shift from traditional to digital methods of communication so that women candidates could reach larger numbers.

These strategies led to successful profiling of over 50 women candidates, shedding light on their perspectives and election campaigns. This approach not only enhanced the visibility of these candidates but also challenged the existing stereotypes.

Diasay recommends the following for better coverage of women in politics:

- Understand the nuances of women's reluctance to engage with the media and patiently work to build trust.
- Develop gender-sensitive reporting techniques to create content that resonates with women candidates and addresses their concerns.
- Encourage women to adopt digital platforms for wider reach and engagement.
- Use existing networks and form new alliances to facilitate access to women candidates.
- Work with community media to reach women in less accessible areas.

Diasay's work with Women TV Liberia during the Liberian elections serves as an example of how targeted strategies and understanding of the local context can lead to effective and inclusive media coverage of women in politics.



***Many of those women were in hard to reach places. They were in places without network so we were not able to get to them. The majority of them were not on the internet. We would urge them to move from analog to digital to reach broader audiences.***

Women TV CEO Lisa Tennah Diasay, Liberia

# Tools and Techniques for Reporting on Women in Elections

In an era marked by increasing emphasis on gender equality and representation, it is essential to equip women journalists with specialized tools and strategies that empower them to navigate the intricacies of election coverage effectively.

## 1. Guidelines for Interviewing Politicians

Interviewing politicians is a critical aspect of political journalism, especially when it comes to highlighting gender issues in elections. To ensure that these interviews are insightful and contribute meaningfully to public understanding, it's essential to approach them with a well-crafted strategy that focuses on gender sensitivity, thorough research, and an understanding of the nuances of political dialogue.

Some key steps include:

- Familiarize yourself with the politician's background, policies, and previous statements on gender issues. This knowledge base allows for more insightful and specific questioning.
- Frame questions to encourage detailed responses rather than simple 'yes' or 'no' answers. This approach provides deeper insights into the politician's views and policies.
- Use gender-neutral language to avoid bias and ensure that questions are framed objectively.
- When discussing gender issues, provide context to highlight their importance and relevance in the current political climate.
- Politicians may give broad or non-specific answers. Be prepared with follow-up questions to probe deeper into their stances on gender-related topics.

## 2. Strategies to Elicit Gender-Specific Policies

Understanding a politician's stance on gender-specific policies is crucial for comprehensive election coverage. The key is to deploy targeted strategies that effectively bring to the forefront their views and commitments on issues that affect different genders directly. This involves crafting questions and discussion points that delve beyond surface-level rhetoric to reveal the depth and practicality of their policies on gender matters.

These can include:

- Ask explicit questions about gender-specific policies, such as measures to address gender pay gaps, women's healthcare, and gender-based violence.
- Compare the politician's policies with existing gender-focused initiatives to understand their stance and potential improvements or changes.
- Present hypothetical scenarios related to gender issues and ask how they would address them.
- Inquire about the anticipated impact of their general policies on different genders.

## 3. Gender Fact-Checking Tools

In an era where misinformation and gendered disinformation can easily spread, fact-checking is an indispensable tool for any journalist. When covering gender issues in politics, employing gender fact-checking tools becomes even more crucial. These tools help in verifying the accuracy of claims made by politicians regarding gender policies and statistics. Fact-checking ensures that the information disseminated to the public is both reliable and factual.

Some fact-checking tools include:

- Use reputable gender studies research, government statistics on gender issues, and reports from recognized NGOs for fact-checking.
- Engage with gender experts or academics for analysis and verification of gender-related claims.
- Check the consistency of the politician's statements on gender issues across different platforms and speeches.

### Gendered Disinformation

Gendered disinformation is a targeted form of disinformation based on gender, often perpetuating stereotypes and sexism. It primarily aims to undermine women, especially those in leadership roles, by spreading false narratives and demeaning portrayals. Such campaigns, characterized by coordinated and malicious intent, disproportionately target women in politics with fake, threatening, and sexualized content. This not only distorts their public image but also discourages women from political participation.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2023/report-freedom-expression-and-gender-dimensions-disinformation>

# Template

## Question Banks for Gender Focused Interviews



### **For Gender-Specific Policies**

- How does your policy plan address the unique challenges faced by women in [specific sector]?
- What measures are proposed in your campaign to tackle gender-based violence?
- Can you outline your strategies for promoting gender equality in the workforce?

### **For Women's Representation**

- What are your views on the current representation of women in politics and how do you plan to improve it?
- How will your administration ensure that women's voices are adequately represented in policy-making?
- In what ways do you plan to support women candidates and politicians within your party?

### **For Challenges Faced by Women Politicians**

- "What barriers do you believe women politicians face and how do you propose to overcome these?"
- Can you share your experiences or observations regarding gender bias in the political arena?
- How will your policy approach or address the systemic challenges that hinder women's progress in politics?

# Content Development: Language of Politics

In an era marked by increasing emphasis on gender equality and representation, it is essential to equip women journalists with specialized tools and strategies that empower them to navigate the intricacies of election coverage effectively.

## 1. Gender-Inclusive Language

Gender-inclusive language in political journalism is key to ensuring that coverage is respectful, accurate, and reflects the diversity of society. This type of language avoids assumptions about gender and aims to include all people, breaking away from traditional biases and promoting equality. How can we ensure that?

- Where possible, opt for gender-neutral terms. For example, use “chairperson” instead of “chairman” or “chairwoman,” and “humankind” instead of “mankind.”
- Refrain from making assumptions about a person’s gender identity. If unsure, use their name or use pronouns they prefer.
- Be consistent with titles. If you use titles for one gender, use them for all.

## 2. Description That Does Not Stereotype

It is important to describe individuals in a way that does not perpetuate stereotypes. This involves focusing on their qualities, achievements, and actions, rather than attributes or roles traditionally associated with their gender.

- Highlight a person’s professional qualifications, achievements, and policy positions, rather than their appearance, personal life, or traits stereotypically associated with their gender.
- Ensure that the portrayal of individuals is balanced and multifaceted, showing a range of traits and qualities that defy stereotypical gender roles.
- Avoid describing women (and men) in relation to other people in their lives (wife, mother, daughter, etc.) unless absolutely pertinent to the story.

## 3. Writing About Sensitive Topics

Covering sensitive topics, especially those related to gender, requires a thoughtful and informed approach. It is important to handle these topics with care to inform readers, without causing unnecessary harm or discomfort.

- Approach sensitive topics with empathy and respect. Be mindful of the language used to describe traumatic or difficult situations.
- Respect the privacy and consent of individuals involved in sensitive stories, especially when discussing issues like gender-based violence or discrimination.
- Steer clear of sensationalizing or trivializing serious issues. Focus on the facts and the broader impact of the topic.



***“The main challenge is to build trust with women. There is an increase in fear in women, they prefer not to tell their story for fear of being exploited and judged. Take into account their context because this is important when reporting. Make their language and cultural identity visible because this is also important to understand the person’s actions”***

**Journalist Teresa Son, Guatemala**

# Template

## Language Usage with Suggested Terms



### **Pronouns**

- Using the correct pronouns, such as “he,” “she,” or “they,” is essential to respect individuals’ gender identities. When in doubt, it’s crucial to ask people about their preferred pronouns to avoid misgendering and demonstrate inclusivity. Using self-identified pronouns is a sign of respect for their gender identity.

### **Gendered Terms to Gender-Neutral**

- Replace “chairman” with “chairperson,” “fireman” with “firefighter,” “policeman” with “police officer,” “stewardess” with “flight attendant.”

### **Describing Professional Achievements**

- Instead of “the first woman to...”, use “accomplished in [field/position] with significant contributions in...”

### **Sensitive Topics**

- Replace “victim of domestic violence” with “survivor of domestic violence,” and “alleged rape” with “reported sexual assault.”

### **Political Positions**

- Use “spokesperson” instead of “spokesman” or “spokeswoman,” and “elected official” instead of “elected man/woman.”

### **Titles and Honorifics**

- For professionals, use titles based on their role, like “Doctor,” “Professor,” or “Officer,” regardless of gender.

### **Describing Family Roles**

- Use “parent” instead of specifically saying “mother” or “father” when the gender is irrelevant. Replace gender-specific terms like “housewife” with “homemaker” or “stay-at-home parent”.

### **Describing Gender Issues**

- Instead of “women’s issues”, refer to “gender issues” or “issues affecting women” to broaden the scope.
- Use “gender equality” instead of “women’s rights” in contexts where you’re discussing the overall goal of equal rights for all genders.

### **Cultural and Social Terms**

- Use “partner” instead of “boyfriend/girlfriend” or “husband/wife” when marital status or gender is irrelevant.



***You can find more examples here:***

<https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>

# Spotlighting Women in Politics

---

Effective coverage of women in politics is important if we want to ensure women's representation in all aspects of society. Journalists often note, however, that finding newsroom support can be difficult. This section looks at practical tactics to increase coverage.

## 1. Getting Women in Politics onto the Diary

Placing women in politics at the forefront of your reporting schedule is crucial. It involves strategic planning, identifying key events, and understanding the political landscape in Africa and Latin America, where women's political participation might face unique challenges and opportunities.

- Mark important political events, elections, and legislative sessions in your diary. Be aware of events related to gender policies or women's rights. Plan ahead for coverage.
- Consider pitching for regular segments or features on women in politics, ensuring ongoing coverage and visibility.
- Pay attention to both national and grassroots-level politics, where women's participation may differ significantly.

## 2. Overcoming Resistance to Gender Stories

Resistance to gender-focused stories can stem from various quarters, including editorial biases or a perceived lack of interest from the audience. Overcoming this requires persistence, the presentation of compelling narratives, and demonstrating the relevance of these stories.

- Focus on impact. Show how gender issues in politics affect broader societal trends and policies.
- Back your pitches with data showing the significance of women's representation in politics and the impact of gender-sensitive policies.
- Feature success stories of women in politics, showing the tangible difference they make.

## 3. Finding the Experts

Credible experts can lend weight and depth to your stories. Finding the right experts requires a network of contacts and resources. This is an ongoing activity for journalists who want their stories to capture the public's attention.

- Constantly look for new sources, handing out and collecting contacts and various events. Remember to follow up with a thank you email after meeting someone new.
- Connect with universities and NGOs that focus on gender studies or political science.
- Use platforms like LinkedIn or X (Twitter) to connect with experts and join relevant groups or forums.
- Use local journalists and contacts who may have direct connections with experts in the field.

## 4. Building Authority

As a journalist, building authority in the field of gender and politics enhances credibility and audience trust. This involves not only extensive knowledge and research but also a consistent and ethical approach to reporting.

- Stay updated with the latest research and trends in gender and politics.
- Maintain high standards of journalism ethics, including accuracy, fairness, and balance in reporting.
- Use social media and public forums to engage with your audience, understanding their perspectives and interests.



# Template

## Building a Diary of Women in Politics Stories



Creating a diary of potential stories focused on women and gender is a proactive approach to maintaining a robust and inclusive news agenda, especially during periods when news diaries may appear thin. By consistently curating and updating this diary, journalists can ensure that stories about women and gender remain an integral part of their reporting, promoting a more balanced and representative media landscape.

### Some ideas to consider include:

- Behind-the-scenes campaign stories that show the inner workings of political campaigns, revealing the strategies, debates, and tensions within a campaign.
- Humanizing politicians by showing them beyond their public personas including exploring their personal histories, motivations, challenges, and even their day-to-day lives.
- Stories focusing on first-time voters, particularly in demographics that are newly eligible to vote or historically underrepresented, can bring a fresh perspective to election coverage.
- Review the impact of policies on everyday life by showing how different political parties' policies could affect the daily lives of ordinary people. These stories help voters understand the practical implications of election outcomes.
- Profiles of trailblazing women who have broken glass ceilings in their respective countries. This could include first-time women leaders, young women politicians, or those overcoming significant socio-cultural barriers.
- Broaden the focus on the role of women in upcoming local or national elections, including as candidates, strategists, or voters. Analyze the impact of their participation on the election outcomes and political processes.
- Investigate how women politicians are influencing key policy areas like health, education, or economic development. Highlight any gender-specific policies they are championing.
- Examine the effectiveness and impact of gender quotas in politics. Stories can explore whether quotas are helping to increase women's political representation and how they are being implemented.
- Cover the unique challenges faced by women in politics, such as gender bias, balancing family and political roles, or dealing with political violence. Include stories on how these challenges are being addressed.
- Feature stories on grassroots movements led by women that have influenced political agendas or led to policy changes. Focus on how these movements are shaping the political landscape.
- Delve into the history of women's political participation in specific countries, highlighting key figures and moments that have shaped the current landscape.
- Focus on young women's involvement in politics, including their roles in political parties, activism, and policy advocacy.

List your own ideas below:

### Plan for the "expected unexpected"

Planning for the "expected unexpected" in an election diary refers to anticipating and preparing for unforeseen events that often occur during election cycles. This proactive approach can significantly enhance the quality and relevance of your reporting. It prepares you to effectively navigate the unpredictable nature of election cycles, ultimately leading to more impactful and trustworthy reporting.

# Leveraging Social Media for Compelling Storytelling

Harnessing the power of social media is key for amplifying the voices and stories of women in politics. By embracing social media, we not only ensure broader visibility for these stories but also foster a more inclusive and informed political discussion, contributing to gender equality and representation in the political arena.

## 1. Building a Social Media Profile

For journalists, a robust social media profile is a powerful tool for establishing credibility, engaging with audiences, and amplifying stories. It's particularly effective in regions where social media usage is growing rapidly.

- Use a professional profile picture and a consistent name across platforms. Your bio should clearly state your expertise and focus area.
- Share a mix of content – articles, insights, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and relevant news – to keep your audience engaged.
- Regularly interact with your audience through comments, polls, and Q&A sessions. This builds a community around your profile.

## 2. Building Interest in the Story During the Storytelling Process

Engaging your audience throughout the storytelling process keeps them invested and can provide valuable feedback and insights.

- Share snippets or previews of your story, creating anticipation for the full piece.
- Post about your reporting process – visiting locations, interviewing subjects, or researching – to give audiences a glimpse into how the story is crafted.
- Use polls, questions, or live sessions to gather opinions or answer questions about your topic.
- Ask your audience for input such as questions to be asked to stories they want told.

***“Read extensively, including reports and podcasts on gender, to understand the importance of stereotype-free and sexism-free storytelling.”***

Journalist Luisa Ruano, Guatemala

## 3. Planning Story Promotion

A strategic approach to promoting your stories can significantly enhance their reach and impact.

- Leverage different social media platforms like X (Twitter) for real-time updates, Instagram for visuals, and Facebook for longer posts to reach diverse audiences.
- Partner with social media influencers or other journalists to expand your story's reach.
- Use analytics to determine the best times to post and schedule content for maximum engagement.

**1 Know the role of women in the specific country or area of reporting.**

**2 Understand and represent a range of opinions and ideologies, avoiding romanticizing women's roles.**

**Engage in dialogues with men or opinion leaders to tackle sexism and machismo in reporting.**

**4 Take courses and stay informed to improve coverage on women-related issues.**

**5 Employ correct terminologies when addressing gender topics.**

**6 Draw examples and methods from established gender-sensitive reports.**

**7 Be aware of the nuances in interviewing to maintain sensitivity.**

**8 Use past training to identify and correct gender biases.**

**9 Collaborate with colleagues to maintain an unbiased perspective.**

# Template

## Story Promotion Process



### Before Publication

- Day -3: Post a teaser about the upcoming story.
- Day -2: Share a behind-the-scenes photo or anecdote related to the story.
- Day -1: Conduct a live Q&A or a poll related to the story's topic.

### Day of Publication

- Morning: Post the story with an engaging caption; use relevant hashtags.
- Afternoon: Share a key quote or an interesting fact from the story.
- Evening: Respond to comments and engage with the audience.

### After Publication

- Day +1: Share a follow-up post addressing the audience's reactions or additional insights.
- Day +2: Repost the story with a different angle or highlight to catch more attention.
- Day +3: Create a short video or graphic summarizing the story for visual platforms.

### Ongoing

- Replace "victim of domestic violence" with "survivor of domestic violence," and "alleged rape" with "reported sexual assault."

### Other strategies:

List other strategies:

“

***Don't take a backward step. Don't shy away from taking up space in the world. Don't assume you are too junior or that people are too busy. Reach out and network. I believe that when you find problems, you should also find solutions.***

World Trade Organisation (WTO) Director-General Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Nigeria



**Fostering Mental Health and Resilience**

**Strategies for Women in  
Politics and Media**

# Fostering Mental Health and Resilience

Navigating the digital landscape can be both empowering and challenging. Understanding and managing the impact of social media on mental health, maintaining work-life balance in the digital age, and differentiating between public and private selves are crucial. This section provides practical strategies and techniques to manage these aspects effectively.

## Understanding the Impact of Social Media on Mental Health

The process of taking care of yourself starts with the recognition that constant exposure to social media can lead to stress and anxiety. Do pay attention to how much time you spend online and how it affects your mood and mental well-being.

Knowing the impact of social media is the first step. It is important to have clear strategies for dealing with online stress. This can include schedule breaks such as a technology free walk or exercise - anything that lets you unplug from digital platforms. Focus on positive interactions and avoid negative or toxic threads. If necessary, have a second person review content during times of high stress and build a support system with peers who understand the unique challenges of your role.

## Techniques to support mental health:

- **Setting Boundaries:** Define clear boundaries between work and personal life. For instance, designate 'no social media' times at home.
- **Time Management:** Prioritize tasks and allocate specific times for work and relaxation.
- **Digital Detox:** Regularly engage in activities that do not involve digital devices.
- **Public Persona:** Understand that your public persona on social media is a curated representation of your beliefs and values.
- **Private Life:** Keep certain aspects of your personal life private to maintain a healthy boundary.
- **Authenticity:** Strive to be authentic in your public expressions, while protecting your private life.

Maintaining mental health and well-being in the fast-paced and often high-pressure world of politics requires conscious effort. By understanding the impact of social media, employing strategies to manage online stress, balancing work and personal life, and maintaining the distinction between your public and private selves, you can safeguard your mental health. Remember, taking care of your mental well-being is not just beneficial for you, but it's also crucial for your effectiveness as a leader.



### ***Online course about online privacy for journalists developed by the IWMMF***

[https://learn.totem-project.org/courses/course-v1:IWMMF+IWMMF\\_KP\\_EN+001/aboutagainst-women-politics-report](https://learn.totem-project.org/courses/course-v1:IWMMF+IWMMF_KP_EN+001/aboutagainst-women-politics-report)

“

***For me, a better democracy is a democracy where women do not only have the right to vote and to elect but to be elected.***

Former President Michelle Bachelet, Chile

# Stress Management Techniques

Exploring various stress management techniques can be a transformative journey: find the strategy that works for you.



## Breathing Exercises

Practice deep breathing techniques when feeling overwhelmed.



## Physical Activity

Regular exercise, even a short walk, can significantly reduce stress.



## Journaling

Write down thoughts and feelings to process emotions.

## Diaphragmatic Breathing

This exercise is designed to help you relax during stressful situations by helping you control your breathing. Diaphragmatic breathing involves taking slow deep breaths from the stomach. It can be done while standing, sitting, laying down, or while walking. This type of breathing is an effective way of managing stress, anxiety, acute stress, panic attacks, and insomnia.

### Prepare your body for the exercise:

1. Sit or lay down in a comfortable position.
2. Close your eyes and place one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach. Notice how you're breathing. Is your stomach rising when you inhale and going down when you exhale, or just your chest?
3. Observe your body. Is it tense? Does any part of your body hurt? How hot or cold are your hands and feet?

### Slowly repeat the following breathing cycles:

1. Breathe through your nose, stomach first, in a four-second count.
2. Hold your breath for four seconds.
3. Exhale through your nose, stomach first, in a four-second count.
4. Hold your breath for four seconds.
5. Repeat this exercise three times.

After completing this exercise for the first time, observe your body. Do you notice any changes? Do you feel more relaxed? Do your neck and shoulders feel less painful or has the pain disappeared? Are your hands and feet warmer?



### Diaphragmatic Breathing

Download a copy of the full exercise here:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BvHgCjyz72RezvQ\\_NYZpf9IHUSRqhc5T/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BvHgCjyz72RezvQ_NYZpf9IHUSRqhc5T/view)

## Protecting Women Journalists from Online Abuse

The rise of social media has given women journalists opportunities to share their work and connect with new audiences. However, this exposure has also made them targets of online abuse, using personal data they shared online.

Personal data of women journalists, shared online for branding, is exploited by online abusers. Media outlets have a role in protection, but journalists must also secure their online information. Proactive measures to secure online information are crucial for protection against online attacks.

Here are top five protection tips presented by Ela Stapley, IWMF Digital Security Advisor.

- 1. Know what data is best kept offline:** Keep sensitive data like identity verification information (e.g., date of birth), contact details, and location information offline.
- 2. Online Audit:** Regularly search your name and personal details on various search engines, including phone and video results, to understand your digital footprint.
- 3. Databroker Defense:** Use services like Delete Me to remove your personal data from data-broker sites that may provide information to abusers.
- 4. Account Security:** Enhance account protection with two-factor authentication, complex passwords for each account, and use of password managers, like 1password.
- 5. Network Awareness:** Inform family and friends about which personal data you prefer to keep private and what can be shared online.



RESOURCES: You can find more stress management examples here:

### ***Mental Health Guide for Journalists Facing Online Violence***

[https://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Final\\_IWMF-Mental-health-guide.pdf](https://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Final_IWMF-Mental-health-guide.pdf)

### ***Self-care***

<https://www.wgn.org.uk/get-informed/self-care>

### ***Managing stress***

<https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/stress>

***“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”***

Writer Audre Lorde, America



---

NATIONAL  
DEMOCRATIC  
INSTITUTE

---



INTERNATIONAL  
WOMEN'S MEDIA  
FOUNDATION