**How to use this toolkit**

This document tells you what you need to ask for every news media story you analyse.

The ‘coding sheet’ document is where you record your responses to the questions. In this toolkit we have provided a ‘news coding questions’ document to explain how to complete the ‘news coding sheet’. We are also including a spreadsheet (in excel format) since you may want to use a spreadsheet for your analysis. You will need the spreadsheet skills if you want to use that approach. We provide both methods (the spreadsheet and word document form) so you can choose what works best for you. You can also use both: write everything on the form and then move this over to a spreadsheet (this is the approach we used)

In our own study, we examined the inclusion and representation of children and teenagers aged between 4 and 18 years for reasons explained in our report. You will need to decide what age group you wish to study. It won’t always be possible to know the age of a child or young person. You can indicate this on the forms if it is unclear. Sometimes you need to estimate.

We have adapted this toolkit from the <http://whomakesthenews.org/> project which examines how women are represented in the news.

**Questions about the news formats**

**Newspapers**

**Q: How many newspapers should be monitored?**

A: We are using the sampling method developed by the Global Media Monitoring Project. This states Australia is positioned in Band 5 which means that **a minimum of 8 newspapers** and **a maximum of 12 newspapers** are to be monitored in order to analyse newspapers in a representative way. However, in Australia newspapers are highly concentrated and therefore we reduced the number to 6 and opted to instead analyse all news stories rather than the top stories only. Newspapers should be selected in terms of their circulation but also you will want to include newspapers owned by different companies, to ensure you include a diverse range of values and views. However, you may want to analyse news media at the state or local level. In this case less newspapers will be needed to be analysed. But the point again is to ensure you consider both circulation and diversity in terms of ownership. You can also use this toolkit to instead examine one single newspaper or one single news topic across news media.

**Q: How many newspaper stories are to be coded?**

A: If your aim is to be representative of the newspaper, we suggest you code at least **12 to 14 stories**. However, you may like to do all news stories or if you are focused on a specific theme, only do stories on health or politics etc. We have found that most newspapers have between 20-35 news stories included (excluding international news sections which we suggest you do not include).

**Q: How do we select which stories to code?**

A: We suggest you do all national news stories (excluding international news sections) unless you are focused on a specific theme.

**Q: What is a newspaper “news story”?**

A news story is any article that reports news. A news story can also be a photograph with a headline, caption or short text.

**Q:** **What is *not* consider a newspaper “news story”?**

A: The following are not considered news stories: story listings (on the front page of some newspapers, you will find a listing of the stories that appear on the inside pages), editorials, commentaries, cartoons and jokes, letters to the editor, advertisements, weather reports.

**Q: If a story begins on one page and continues elsewhere, should this be treated as one story?**

A: Yes

**Radio and Television**

**Q: How many radio/ TV stations should be monitored?**

A: We are using the sampling method developed by the Global Media Monitoring Project. This states Australia is positioned in Band 3 for radio. which means that a **minimum of 3 radio stations and max of 5 radio stations.** For TV, Australia are band 5 so this means and **a minimum of 8 TV stations** and **max of 12** must be monitored. As with newspapers, radio/TV stations should be selected in terms of their reach (numbers of listeners/viewers) but also you will want to include news media owned by different companies, to ensure you include a diverse range of values and views. However, you may want to analyse news media at the state or local level. In this case less radio/TV stations will be needed to be analysed but the point again is to ensure you consider both reach and diversity in terms of ownership.

**Q: How many newscasts, should be monitored?**

A: We suggest you do all the stories in the newscast. From our research we have found that there are usually 12-25 news stories in a 30-minute news broadcast.

**Q: What is a radio/ TV “newscast”?**

A: Newscasts are the bulletins or programmes whose exclusive purpose is to deliver 'the news'. In many countries, such bulletins are simply titled 'The News', 'The Ten O'Clock News' etc.

**Q: What is *not* a radio/ TV “newscast”?**

A: The following are not considered a TV newscast: current affairs magazines, documentaries, infotainment programmes, programmes that are mainly about sports.

**Q: What types of news stories can be coded in a newscast?**

A: This will include all types of news such as politics, reports on education, medicine, business, and entertainment. Sports reports should only be coded if they are part of the newscast.

**Q: What types of news *cannot* be coded in a newscast?**

A: Do not code weather forecasts and reports, introductions or headlines. Also, do not code scrolling news text (usually that appears at the bottom of the screen) as well as advertisements.

**Q: What practical things do you need to be take into consideration for radio/ TV news coding?**

A: Ideally, you should aim to record every newscast so that you can replay each story back to make sure that you coded all the information correctly.

**Internet**

**Q: How many news websites should be monitored?**

A: Australia is band 3 which means a representative sample should include a **minimum of 4 news websites** and a **maximum of 7 news websites** to be monitored. As with all other media, make sure to consider circulation and get diversity in terms of ownership range.

**Q: How many internet news stories should be monitored and coded?**

A: A total of **12 to 14 stories** or online news content items with links on the home page should be monitored and coded.

**Q: What is an internet “news website”?**

A: Select only websites concerned with news. This means that the main function of the website

selected must be to deliver news and not celebrity gossip, advertising, quizzes and puzzles, for example.

**Q: Which news websites should *not* be considered?**

A:The following are not considered internet news websites in this methodology: blogs or other personal sites, social networking platforms like Twitter, news aggregation sites such as Google News, Yahoo News and Reddit, wire services like Associated Press (AP) and Reuters. Also, do not include specialist websites that focus on a particular type of news, e.g. business news websites.

**Q: What types of news can be coded in an internet news story?**

A: This will include all types of news such as politics, reports on education, medicine, business, and entertainment. Sports reports should only be coded if they are part of the news section and not a specific sports section. Some internet news items consist of a photograph with a headline, caption or short text. And sometimes, the main story is a video. Code these just like longer stories. We suggest you use the front page to select 12-14 stories (or a larger number if you prefer), counting them as they appear from the top left of the screen.

**Q: What types of news should *not* be coded in an internet news story?**

A: Do not code editorials, commentaries, readers’ feedback, story listings, cartoons and jokes, weather reports and advertisements.

**Q: If a story begins on one page and continues elsewhere, should this be treated as one story?**

A: Yes