

Introduction

This report is one of a series of lexicons produced by PeaceTech Lab that are focused on social media and hate speech in a particular country context. Since 2014, PeaceTech Lab has worked with local partners in countries throughout Africa and the Middle East to develop lexicons of hateful language and to better understand the dynamics of online hate speech and its potential correlations with offline violence. This research is part of the Lab's broader goal of addressing online hate speech and its impact on communities in conflict zones. Libya has been identified as a priority country for this work given the unstable security situation and the extensive fragmentation in the country in the years since the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi, all of which has been shown to play out in a burgeoning online environment. As of December 2017, 54.1 percent of Libya's population were Facebook users¹ while the mobile phone penetration rate is over 100 percent, with many people having more than one mobile subscription².

PeaceTech Lab's work on hate speech aims to identify and contextualize the particular types of language that are likely to cause violence. This project identifies relevant terms through on-the-ground information gathering and examines their origins, background context, and use in a particular country environment. *To successfully monitor and counter hateful speech, we must first identify specific terms and the social and political context that makes them offensive, inflammatory, or even potentially dangerous.* The research also seeks to identify alternative terms that would mitigate or replace this language and thereby contribute to building peace. Finally, this report is intended as a resource for individuals and organizations involved in monitoring and combatting hateful speech so that their work can be more effective. The Lab has a large network of local organizations that have used these lexicons to inform and improve their efforts to address hateful content and prevent potential violence. Dozens of projects and initiatives have been launched by local partners to counter hate speech in their local contexts. These reports also enhance the overall body of knowledge on hateful online speech to inform and improve other efforts around the globe. The Annex at the end of the report includes a description of the project's research methodology, challenges, and risks.