The Role of @SocialMedia in the Local Institutionalization of #HumanRights Norms

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The Glocalization of Development

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THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHAPEL HILL

1. Theory – How do Human Rights Spread from Global to Local?
Transnational Advocacy Networks

2. Method – How can we Study the Local Implementation of Human Rights?
Case Study: Human Rights Treaty Monitoring Bodies

3. Application – How can we Analyze the Local Institutionalization of Human Rights through Social Media?

Norm Change – From Global to Local

- Constructivism
  - Human Rights defines Norms
  - Norms influence International Relations
  - Normative 'Life Cycle'
- Spiral Model of Norm Change
- Role of Transnational Advocacy Networks in Challenging Prevailing Discourses

Institutionalization

Local

Global

Mobilization
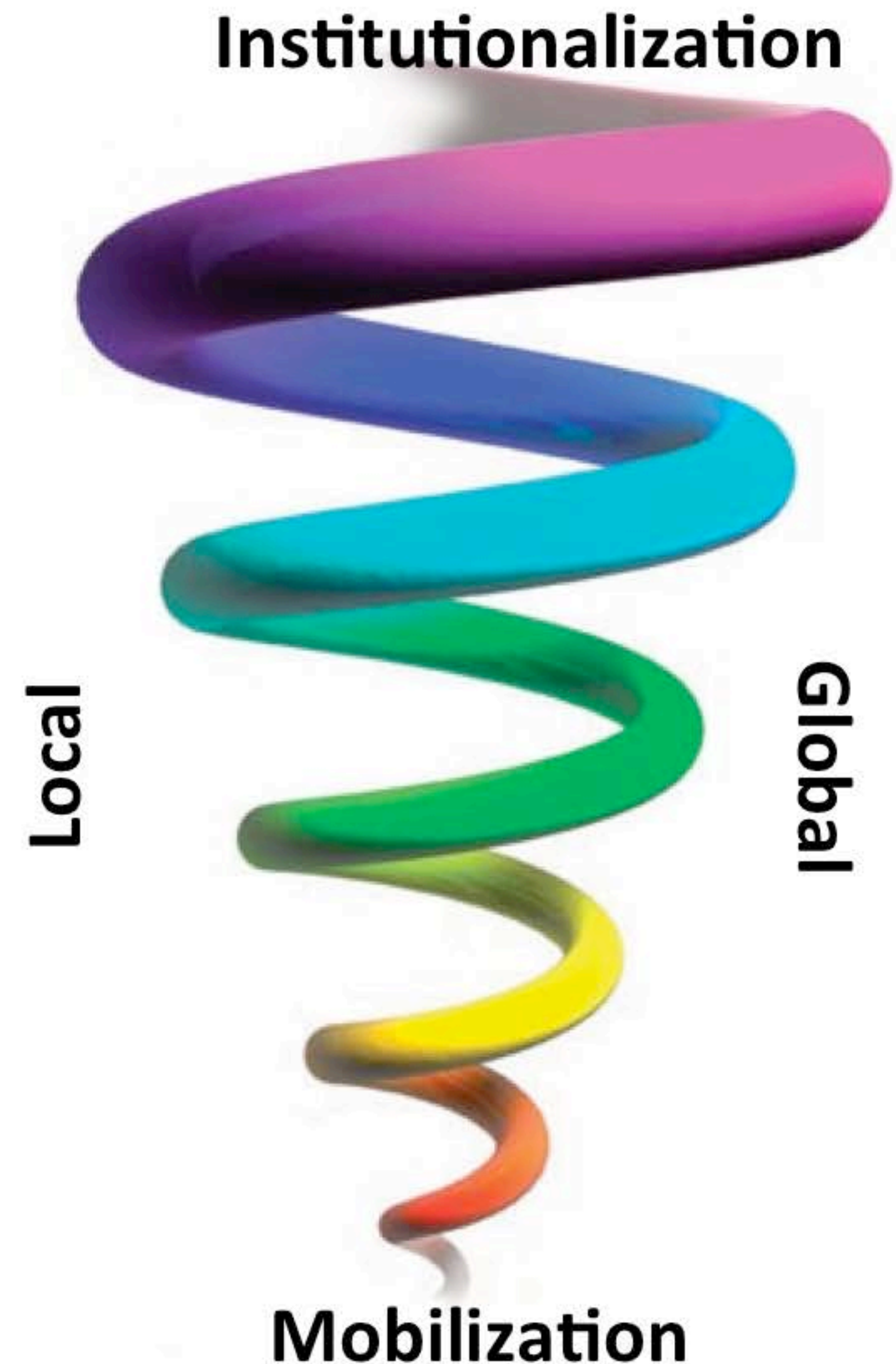
Transnational Advocacy Networks

"Shared Awareness" – Connecting Local and Global

- Different specialties
- Mass collective action
- Local Issue Selection & Framing
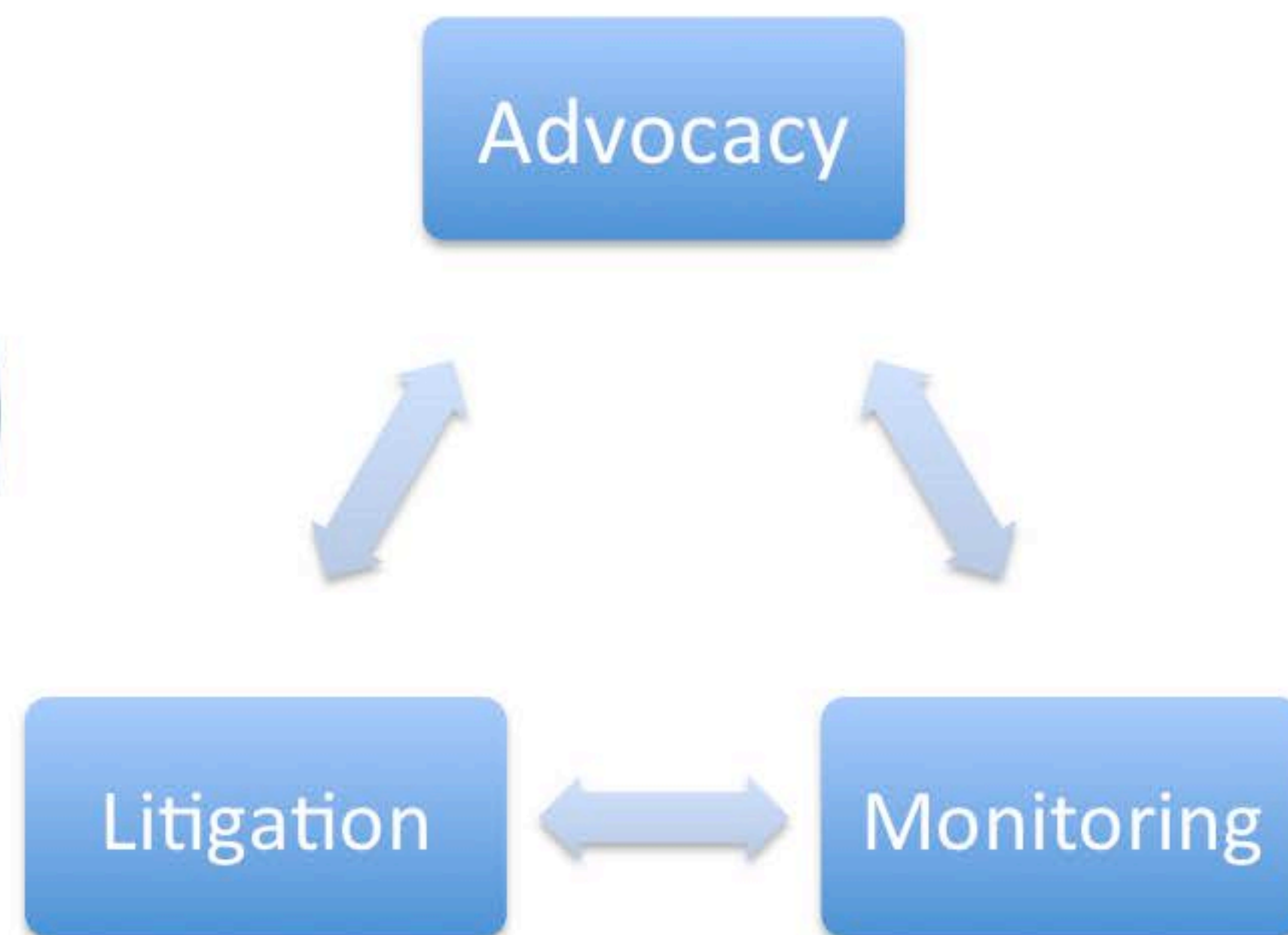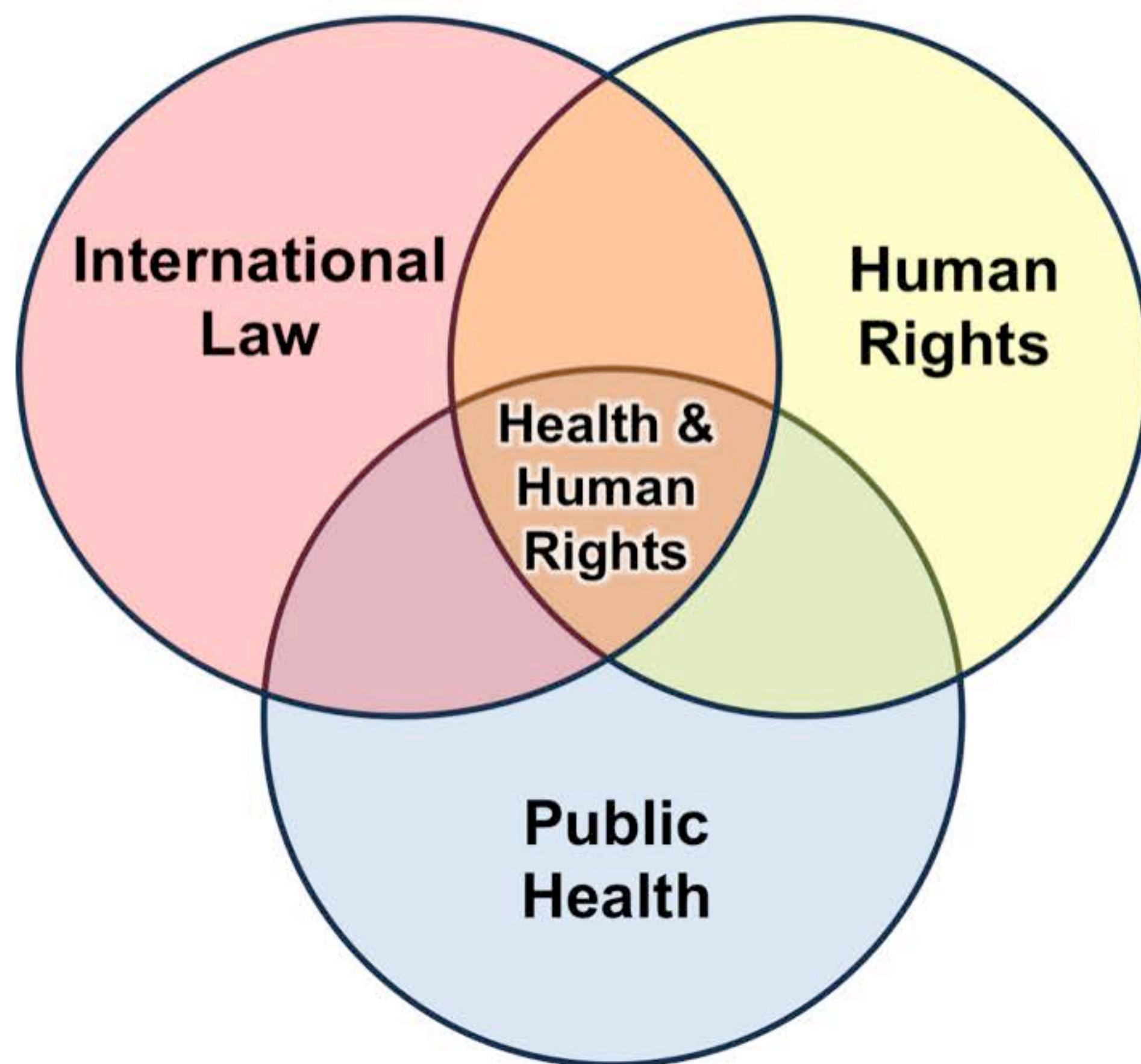- New way to coordinate
- Reinforce Local Efforts

Effective in Shifting Norms?

- Local Actors Ignored by Global Elites

Social Media can Exacerbate These Threats...

Human Rights Accountability through Treaty Bodies

From Implementation to Monitoring

"the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights."
— UN General Assembly 2010

Monitoring State Reports on Water

What are States Reporting to the Committee on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights?

Analyzing State Reports

Linguistic Analysis ⟹ Thematic Analysis (through analytic coding)

Coding State Reports

Type of Information	Normative Content	Human Rights Principles	Population Addressed	Context of Reference	Types of Information	Sphere of Life
Structure	Affordability	Equality and Non-discrimination	Urban	Health	Quantitative	Home
Process	Quality	Participation	Rural	Sanitation	Qualitative	School
Outcome	Availability	Accountability (includes monitoring)	Women	Hygiene		Workplace
	Accessibility Acceptability	Sustainability	Children Racial/ethnic minorities	Food & agriculture Housing		Health Facility
			Migrants Refugees	Facilities/Services Education		
			Vulnerable Population	Resource Availability		
			Geographic Regions	Ecosystem Health		
			Disabilities	Emergencies		
			Older Persons Prisoners	Water Source Assistance and Cooperation		
				Land Tenure Status		

State Reporting on Water & Sanitation (Over Time)

Average Number of Water and Sanitation Codes per Paragraph

General Comment 15

Office of High Commissioner Report

UN General Assembly Resolution

CESCR Reporting Guidelines

Average Codes per Paragraph — Trend Line
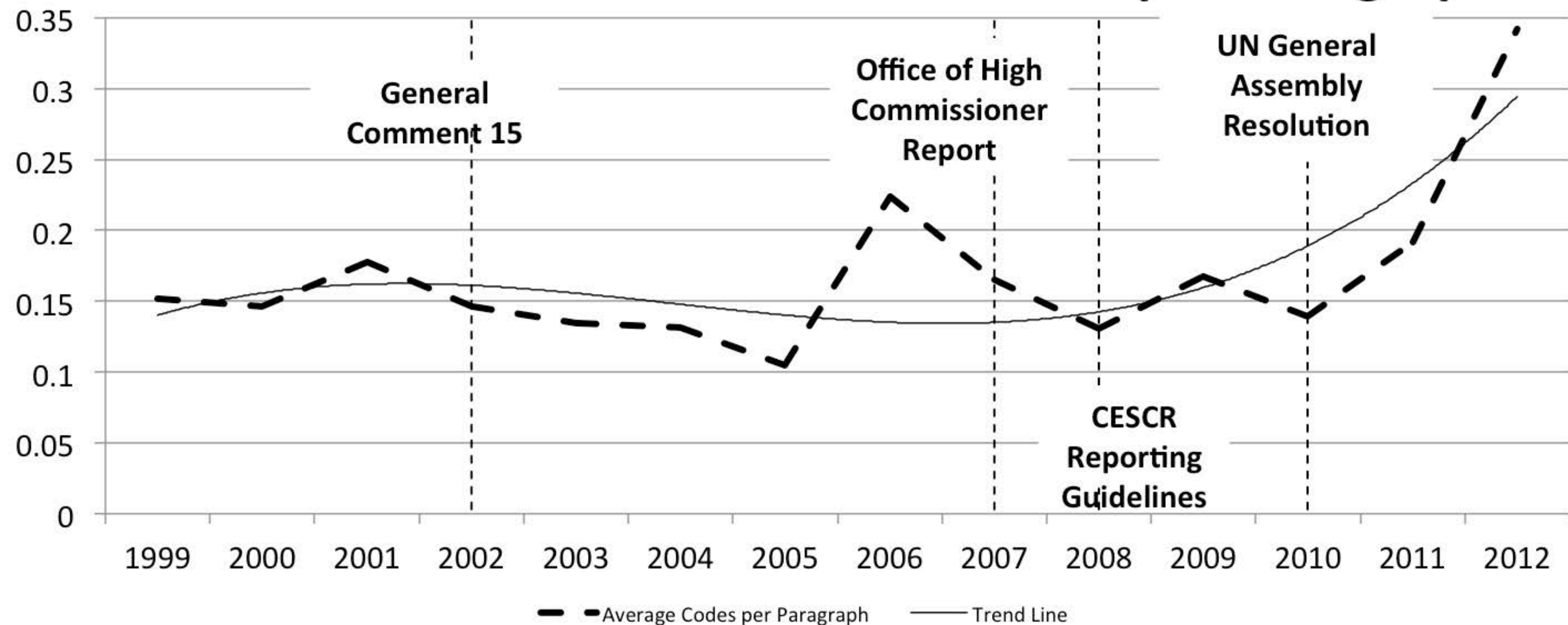
Benjamin Mason Meier & Yuna Kim, *Human Rights Accountability through Treaty Bodies: Examining Human Rights Treaty Monitoring for Water and Sanitation*, DUKE JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL LAW (in press)

Social Media

- Social Media Use Exploding
  - 2.55 billion individuals by 2017
  - NGO use social media to engage individuals

- Opportunities for Norm Change
  - Public Awareness
  - Mass Media
  - Policy Reforms
- Vast Inequalities

Social Network Users Worldwide, 2011-2017
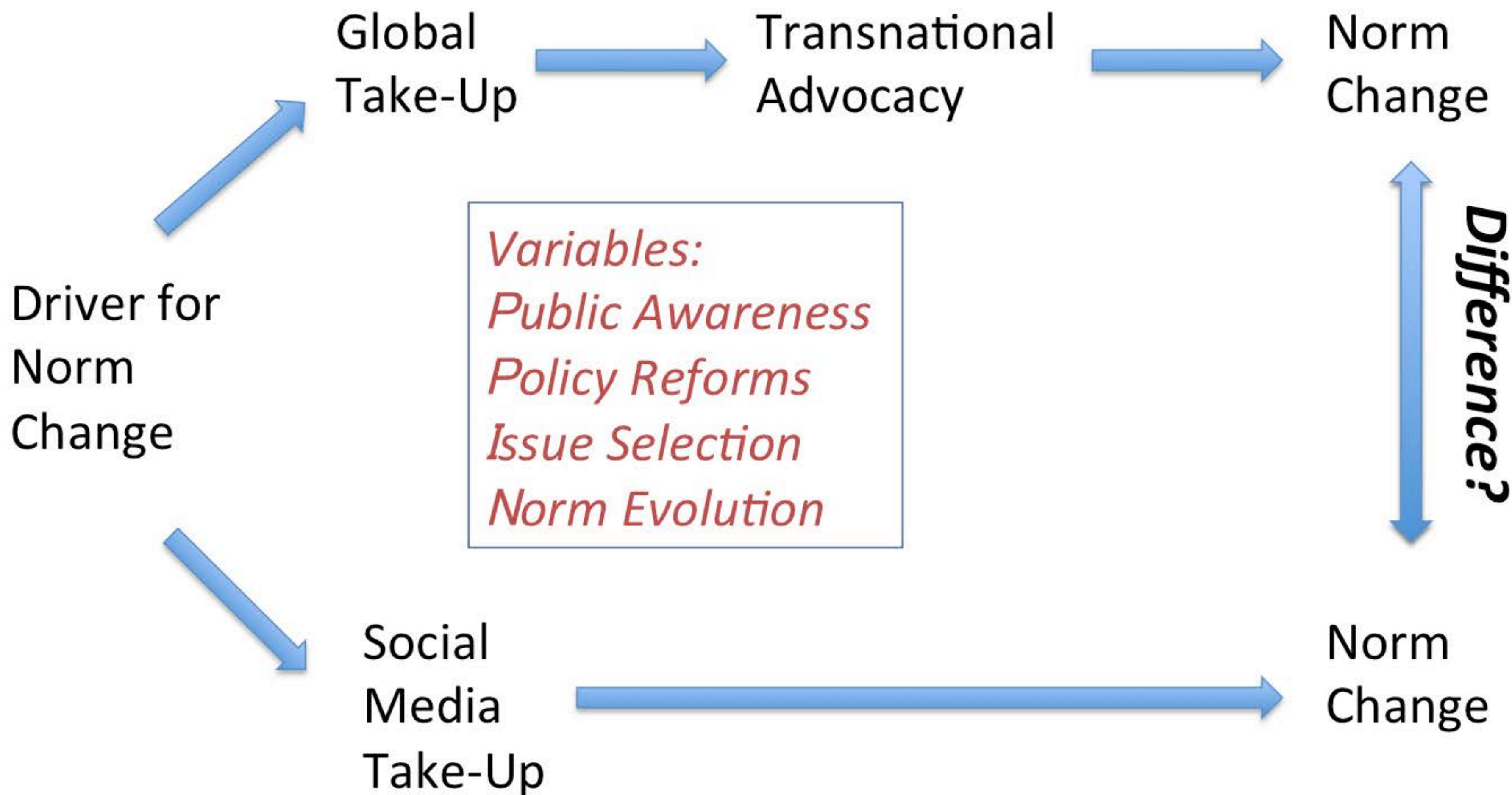billions and % change
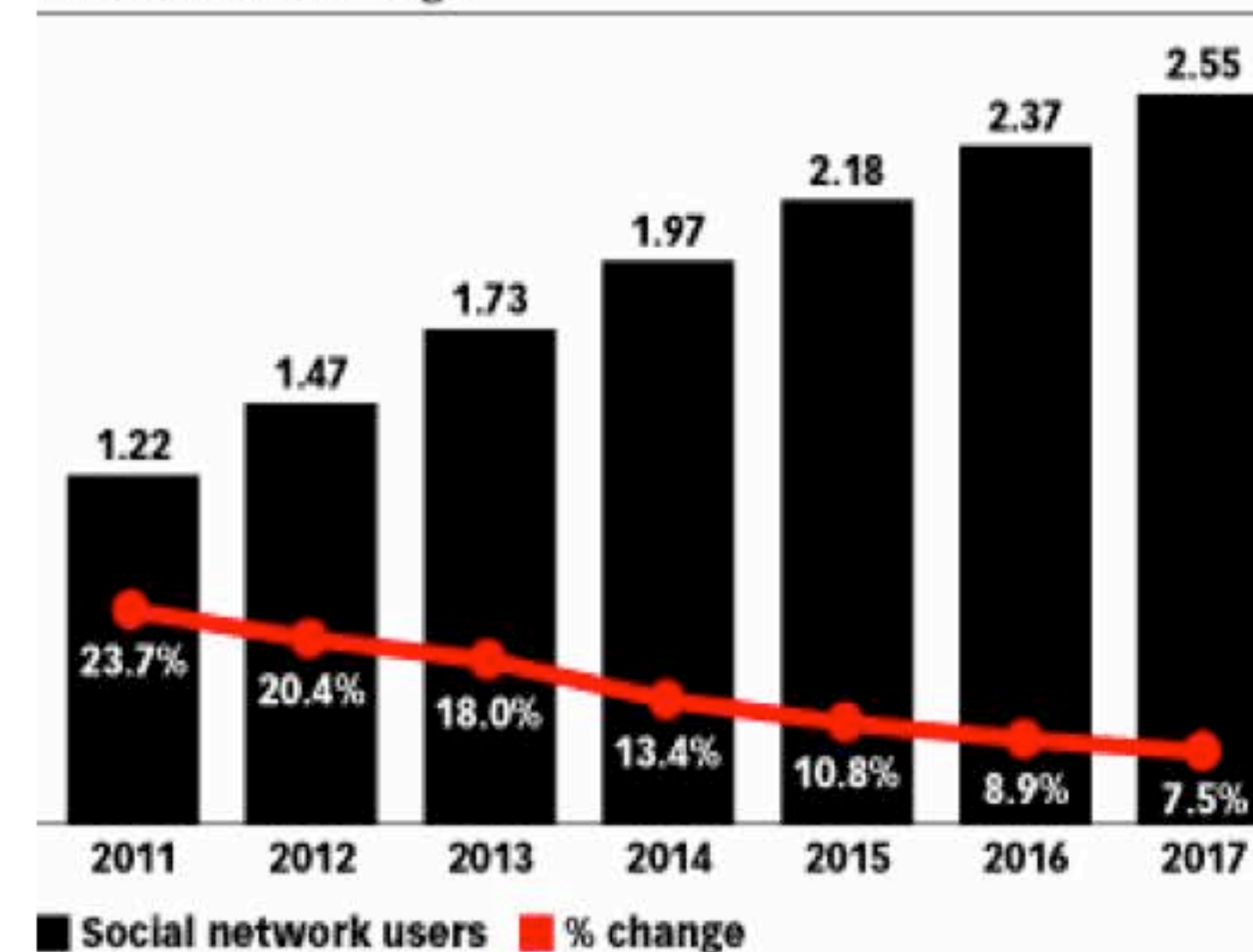
Limitations of Social Media

- Issue Selection & Framing
  - From Expertise to "Clout"
  - The Spread of "Slacktivism"
- Foreign Interference
- Too Fast to Change Norms
- Crowding-Out Local Efforts

IF WE GET 1,000 LIKES ON FACEBOOK, THIS CHILD WILL RECEIVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.

facebook

The Research Begins...

Reilly Anne Dempsey & Benjamin Mason Meier,
*Framing the Position of Social Media in the Local
Institutionalisation of Human Rights Norms*