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IMPLEMENT AN IMPACTFUL SOCIAL CAMPAIGN

These guidelines are dedicated to supporting low-budget campaigns run by young activists and volunteers, who would like to attract people's attention to the matters and challenges happening within a society. This manual is a guide on how to create and execute social media campaigns in these circumstances and the tools presented here, while based on well-established standards and best practices, were chosen to be easily applicable by young teams with few resources using free tools and basic unpaid analytics features on social media, with no marketing spending.

The presented guidelines cover four main stages as follows:



Stage 1.

Developing a Communication Strategy



Stage 2.

Planning Your Campaign



Stage 3.

Creating Campaign Content



Stage 4.

Monitoring and Evaluation



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STAGE 1. DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Before you start any new project, or, in this case, campaign it is wise to first take a look at the context of what you want to do. Usually campaigns, including online ones, are intense activities, which are resource- and time-consuming. In this chapter we present some fundamental concepts of effective communication and further steps that are planning, creating, running, monitoring and evaluating your campaigns.

Strategy for addressing ethical and gender issues in the campaigns

In social impact campaigns against any matters of your particular interest it is important to be aware of the language we are using, as instead of alleviating the problem we may unknowingly add to it. Unconscious biases, which may influence the way we speak and act without us being aware of it, especially under time pressure, affect even the best of people, which is why in running your campaign it is so important to review your messages before sending them out into the world, so that you can catch any potentially discriminatory content before it is out of your control.

These are the most important tips to have in mind when developing a social media campaign:





a. Be aware of discriminatory language

Discriminatory language is words or phrases that disparage or unequally value a person or a social group. Discriminatory language must be avoided because it's a barrier to communication, making people feel grossly misunderstood, excluded, ridiculed or even attacked by your message. While some types of discriminatory language, like racial epithets, may be easy to spot, you may sometimes find yourself saying something you didn't intend to be discriminatory because you weren't aware of how to phrase things correctly. This section will help you avoid that.

What type of discriminatory language to watch out for?

There are generally four types of discriminatory language:

- Stereotypes

Using stereotypes can be described in the following way: Focusing on someone's obvious features to categorise them as a member of a group, and then assuming additional facts about that person based on general ideas about this group that are almost always untrue. For example, you might assume that since Deaf people can't hear, they are not interested in music, but saying so would make some Deaf drummers feel left out. Certain stereotypes can also sound positive or neutral, like "the romantic French" or "the tech-phobic elderly," however they also exclude some of your audience by making them feel you are making assumptions about them based on other people's common ideas about a social group they belong to, without getting to know them or emphasising their individuality.

- Wrong terminology

Some terms that describe particular groups or their members may make these people feel misunderstood or even attacked. These can be things like racial epithets, but also less obvious terms, such as words used to refer to a social group that have been rejected by this group as discriminatory but still prevail among people who are not aware of the current, correct terms that the group prefers. For example, Deaf people prefer to see the word "Deaf" capitalised, since the lowercase "deaf" is actually a medical term that only refers to the degree of someone's hearing ability, while "Deaf" refers to a vibrant culture of people with its own language and history.





- Unnecessary labels

When you use unnecessary labels, you mention someone's characteristics when they are not relevant. For example, you could say "Our Snapchat person Mary, who has Down syndrome, came to help us after working for a recent presidential candidate." Mentioning that Mary has Down syndrome is not relevant to her position or her past experience. This can also take the form of a compliment. For example, if you say "Despite his age, our friend John is a great front-end engineer," that may sound positive, but in reality, you are also saying that you expected John to be unable to do front-end engineering work based on your assumptions about the abilities of people of his age, which is not relevant to the fact that John does great front-end work.

- Assumptions about your audience

Another example of discriminatory language is assuming that the people you're trying to reach with your message have certain beliefs, resources or characteristics that they may in fact share. For example, when you ask your audience about where they purchased this year's Christmas gifts for their loved ones, you may exclude people who don't celebrate Christmas or can't afford to buy presents.

Inclusive language checklist

Discriminatory language can refer to any individual and any social group beyond the ones described below. It's good to develop an internal filter for words and phrases that may unintentionally sound discriminatory, in order to spot these parts of your message and search for other, more inclusive ways of talking to your audience. This inclusive language checklist will help you make sure that your language choices do not exclude, harmfully misrepresent or demean any individuals or social groups.

Let's have a look at two examples of suggestions about how to phrase your communication to avoid using language that discriminates against particular social groups.





Social status and class

In many cultures, attributes like access to financial resources, ancestry and privilege are used to categorise people into social classes. Stereotype logic adds multiple other attributes to these characteristics, with ideas like “rich people are smarter” or “middle-class people have bigger families.” Discriminatory language related to social status and class can also include using terms that demean people with the given attribute, as well as jokes based on stereotypical ideas about people with that attribute, such as the way they talk or what they wear.

Ethnicity and nationality

Stereotypes about personal attributes like someone’s ethnic background or nationality of origin are persistent and must be carefully avoided in all communication. Try to become sensitive about common stereotypes related to ethnicities and nationalities in your culture. Stereotype logic adds additional positive or negative attributes to these characteristics, and makes it sound like almost everybody with the given attribute is the same – some ethnicities and nationalities may be thought of as resourceful, lazy, good with computers, bad at sports, deeply religious, and so on. Remember that someone’s nationality or ethnicity does not by itself lead to any other attributes or characteristics that you could assume about them.

Certain word choices may also discriminate against people based on their ethnic or national background. Discriminatory terms related to ethnicity and nationality must always be avoided, and if you are not sure which terms are fine to use, reach out to an organisation that represents the interests of the ethnic group or nationality in your country. Do not mention someone’s ethnic or national background if it’s not relevant.





A. TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION EMOTIONS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES

In the context of social campaigns, unlike in marketing, it is often more effective to use arguments, rather than emotions to persuade others. However, eliciting emotions is still a powerful tool so we will look at some science-backed tips that psychology may provide to help us plan our communication strategy.

First, we may be tempted to base our communication on a message that we like or enjoy, but the effect of messages based on factual arguments is more stable and enduring compared to those based on aesthetics or humour.

In many campaigns the authors use fear to strengthen their message, and sometimes it is a good tool to change attitudes, but only in certain circumstances. When we are emotionally activated, we are also more engaged and it becomes easier for us to remember the content of a campaign. However, this is true only when our emotional activation is moderated and we feel concerned, but not threatened by the message. If the message you convey is too threatening, usually the audience may feel the need to preserve their well-being and to think “it does not concern me”, “this thing will never happen to me”. Therefore, instead of increasing someone’s engagement in the cause, we may actually get quite the opposite effect. In other words, no matter how tempting and brilliant it may look at first sight, the fear might make people feel totally not concerned.

Thus, before starting your campaign, it is important to evaluate emotions the message you are sending may elicit in your audience. Emotions are very complex processes and it is difficult to induce just the right level of emotional activation – you would probably need a team of psychologists, a lot of experience and testing to be able to do this consistently. First of all, make sure that your campaign is not too threatening to the audience. It is best to pretest the message on someone you know who has a similar opinion to the target audience of your campaign. You can simply show them the content of your campaign and ask them how they feel about it. If your message is too strong, in terms of eliciting negative emotions, you might consider changing the tone of the message by adding humour. Another strategy to change the emotional impact of a message is by presenting it with precise causes of a given situation together with a direct solution to improve the situation. People feel less threatened when they understand the situation and when they know what to do to change it. However, you don’t want to sound too patronising, so this strategy also needs to be tested with your target audience.





B. FOCUS ON YOUR WELLBEING

When working for a good cause it is also important to take care of your own well-being. Social campaigns often include interaction with others, either direct or on social media. The more controversial your topic, the more likely you are to receive some aggressive or inappropriate comments that may be difficult to respond to if you are not prepared in advance. You might feel sad, angry or upset. So, it is important to prepare possible answers in advance. First, think about the likely scenarios and then brainstorm with your team different possible answers, their good and bad sides, taking into account sticking to your campaign goals and what you are comfortable with.

C. FOLLOW ONLINE SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES

Just like any type of online projects that aim to reach a large number of people, your campaigns risk attracting nefarious and potentially dangerous activity, such as hackers trying to take control of your accounts or steal your private information. To minimise these risks read up on online safety and keep up with new threats that may overcome your security measures. Even though your particular security needs will always depend on what devices and services you use and the extent of knowledge, resources and professionalism of your attackers - it is best to remember that no precautions will keep you safe from all threats, but there are still some general rules to follow that will help you keep safe online.





STAGE 2. PLANNING YOUR CAMPAIGN

In this chapter you will find methods and tools useful in planning your campaign.

Campaign strategy

Don't think of your communication strategy as a slogan you can repeat over and over. A campaign is more than creating short and memorable catchphrases and using catchwords. It consists of five pillars: your goal, audience, messenger, environment and story. These are intertwined to give you a coherent message. A message you, or someone else as the messenger, can present. One that your audience will understand and find appealing and one that will work towards your goal in your environment. To keep things simple you may use one central tool for planning and evaluating the key aspects of the campaign: GAMES, which stands for Goal, Audience, Messenger, Environment and Story. GAMES tool might help you formulate your campaign vision, including key information about your campaign. Find answers to key questions about them. In your answers try to be as specific as possible. You can fill out this chart individually and only later discuss your ideas, to see if all of your team members share the same vision. Do not be afraid if you do not know all the answers yet, you will arrive at them at some point.



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GAMES	PLANNING STAGE	YOUR ANSWERS
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your challenge? • What is the core problem you are concerned with and what would be the ultimate change you want to see? • What do you need to do in order to get there? • Why are you doing it? • Why is the campaign needed? • What is the campaign about? • What do you want to happen? • What is the audience asked to do? 	
Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is your audience? • Who are you communicating with? • Which social media is your audience in? • What would be your audience's motivation to share your message with their friends? • Would the audience be asked to comment and share their experiences? 	
Messenger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can tell the story? • What is the motivation of the messenger to deliver the message? • Will the messenger also be the one who engages with the audience if they respond? • Do you have delegated respondents, who will engage with your audience to discuss the message? 	



<p>Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the context? • Where and when the message arrives? • What else is going on then? • What other communications will be delivered via this profile, if any? • Is the campaign tied to any external events? 	
<p>Story</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your story about? • How do you tell your story? • What media and modes of communication do you use? Do you use video or images? • Did you leave yourself enough time to create them? • What is the main short message that your audience should remember? • What is the slogan? • Do you have a hashtag people can share? • What part of your story will motivate the audience to act? • What will be the trigger? 	





a. Do a thorough research

When preparing the campaign, it is crucial to know where to find reliable information about your topic. The task is not easy, especially when we don't have direct access to the information, and we have to rely on someone's interpretation of the data, facts, or statistics. Have a look at several tips that might help you assess the credibility of the information you want to include in your campaign.

- Always check your sources.
- Remember that statistics are not 1 to 1 reflection of reality.
- One research study is usually not enough to be sure.
- Take both sides into account. We appear more credible if we cite the arguments for both sides instead of ignoring the arguments that do not agree with our hypothesis. Otherwise, people may get the impression that we are trying to manipulate them by omitting a part of the truth.
- Anonymous Authority and "American Scientist" is just a trick – if possible, quote research directly, so that everyone can access the original article.
- Be clear and transparent.

b. Set campaign goals

When choosing your exact campaign goals you can consider some of the approaches and methods mentioned below:

- Education and awareness raising on the specific matter; making the audience consider the impact for the whole society and every individual.
- Addressing the matter/challenge already existing online (to recognize, report and react)
- Building and expressing solidarity with victims of a specific phenomena as well as remembering crimes victims, best relevant to your country or region/area.
- Support to marginalised or vulnerable groups of young people (e.g. young refugees, LGBT+) and empowering and including them (e.g. by involving them in the process of developing narratives).
- Deconstruction, discreditation and demystification of existing messages with facts, offering a positive alternative message or narrative, emphasising the human rights based approach, promoting culture of peace, equality, across national, cultural, social, religious, ethnic or organisational boundaries during the process of developing narratives.
- And most of all, mobilising and engaging others to do all these activities with you.





While these categories can overlap, it is important to choose only a few of them so that your campaign goal remains achievable in a short time frame and on a small budget, or SMART, as explained below. When choosing a goal, try to choose some activities that can complement each other and that are somewhat related. So, if your goal is to address hate speech by exploring a different narrative on social media, you can at the same time raise awareness about the nature of hate speech and participate in efforts to report hate speech present in different media. To address these issues, you can work with relevant stakeholders, for example, people from the media or activist organisations.

SMART

To set better goals it is helpful to follow the SMART criteria to make sure that your plans are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. You can treat SMART as a checklist against which you test your goals, asking yourself each time “Is my goal SMART?” and if not, evaluating the problem in each case and either adjusting your goal, or taking the risk and keeping it as is.

Specific

- Describe your goal in as much detail as you can.
- Formulation of the objective should be unambiguous and leave no room for loose interpretation.

Measurable

- Specify indicators to help measure your progress.

Achievable

- Assess if you have the resources necessary to achieve this goal.
- An overambitious goal undermines faith and motivation to achieve it.

Relevant

- Your goal should be an important step forward and must be valuable to everyone in your team and to a community/group of your choice that you want to help.

Time-bound

- Set a time frame, without set deadlines there won't be a sense of need for action.



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c. Define your campaign stakeholders

As campaigns are a form of communication, and this communication happens between people, the stakeholders, and understanding of their needs and skills, are what you should be very aware of when planning your campaign. By stakeholders we understand all groups and people who have a stake, or an interest, in the campaign area, including activists, members of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), volunteers, members of the affected group, local communities, members of government organisations, etc. It is important to understand the term “stakeholder”, also in relation to the terms “audience” and “target group” as these terms may coincide in diverse ways.

d. Try to understand audience of the campaign

Understanding the diverse audience groups for the campaign is the key to its success. We may create a beautiful narrative with striking images and execute it perfectly, but if it does not answer the needs of our audience then it will not succeed in its original goal.

Once you have pinpointed the goal of the campaign, we encourage you to brainstorm with your team who are the possible stakeholders for this goal. Below we show you our ideas related to your audience based on the problem of discriminating against people based on race. These groups are singled out, as they are either directly affected by discrimination or they participate in it - yes, even observers are participants, as they ignore it rather than take a stand. Their reasons for this passive behaviour can be different, but this group is usually the greatest in terms of numbers, and they are the easiest to reach, because they do not have strong enough motivation to sway their actions either way, but they may discover it thanks to your campaign!



	Targets of discriminators	Bystanders and Observers	Unaware Forwarders	Haters
Short description	people, or groups of people, who are targeted by those who spread discriminatory messages, either organised or individual	<p>people who try to ignore hate and discriminatory content</p> <p>people who are undecided are better targets of campaigns because it is easier to convince them to change their mind</p>	people who share online content which they do not recognize as harmful, abusive or fake. They can be easily manipulated because they do not have the habits of thinking critically and checking their sources.	<p>people who create and disseminate discriminatory messages online</p> <p>people who share such content on purpose</p>
Your example roles as campaigners	<p>give them the skills needed to increase their well-being online</p> <p>help them see that they are not alone and report any abuse as well as encourage others to engage in debates to defend them</p>	<p>move them from the passive position of 'seeing-but-not-acting' to a position where they engage with the problem</p> <p>create a call to action they can follow and give them arguments they can use to support their views</p> <p>teach them to find more arguments on their own</p> <p>have them practise empathy and think of themselves as parts of larger social circles</p>	<p>make them aware of the impact of their messages and increase their responsibility in creating or sharing it with others</p> <p>give them the ability to perceive prejudice, fake or bias in online content by analysing its discourse and spotting red flags</p> <p>teach them to check their sources and recognize fake ones</p>	<p>make alternative narratives, counternarratives to their content</p> <p>understand their motivations, which often may stem from fear perpetuated by unreliable media sources</p> <p>offer alternative news sources</p>
Benefits from involving them in planning & evaluation	can ensure that the campaign speaks for them and is authentic in its key message	can evaluate if the campaign touches their feelings and is convincing	can help expose weak points of the campaign	can help expose weak points of the campaign





e. Create an audience personas and stories

So, if your goals are clear and you are aware of different groups of stakeholders, now it's time to get to know your key audience. Of course, the best way to do that is to engage with them before your campaign and to cooperate with them throughout your campaign planning phase, however it may not always be possible. An alternative is to create "audience personas", that is fictional characters, who nevertheless can help you understand the motivations and needs of your audience. However, you have to be aware that when you make the personas, you will be engaging in stereotypical thinking to some extent. Such generalisations may be useful for you, because they will help you understand the target groups a little bit better, but they are not on any level true, so you can never assume anything about individuals based on this tool - because "audience personas" are just that - a planning tool.

This tool is needed, because your campaign cannot be addressed to everyone - messages like that often reach no one. People have very distinct identities and they react and share things they can identify with, or identify against - and you need active followers who will work towards your campaign goal. So, when making your personas, at least one for each of your audience groups (as explained above) try to be as specific as you can, make your fictional characters well-rounded and sharp - make them people you can imagine you are having a conversation with - because in your campaign this is exactly what you will be doing. Here you can see a simple example of a fictional persona. You may try to use the Xtensio online tool to help you create audience personas.

Marcos is a 15-year-old boy from Barcelona high school student.

Interests and activities in free time:

- skateboarding and graffiti
- listening to music and watching music videos
- scrolling social media and chatting with friends online
- playing online games

Dreams:

- to travel around the world
- to get a good job

Fears:

- being unemployed or having a boring job in the future

Places of online activity:

- YouTube, Discord, Instagram, TikTok





Once you have a few personas, you can decide what the campaign needs to achieve to win their engagement.

f. Create audience scenario

Start with “high order story” and think about what is the general thing your audience member wants. Perhaps Marcos would like to have a fun picture to share on his wall, but one that has some substance to it? Maybe Adriana just wants a platform to share her concerns and ideas? Next, think of what it means to them, what are the things they “want” and “need”, finally, decide what it means to you, in terms of what you need to provide. See the example below.

Notice that if you combine these stories, you may have a ready recipe for your campaign. In this case the conclusions together may point to create a comic strip, with beautiful art, that will explore the difficulties experienced by targets of abuse.

Audience scenario		
High order story	Story broken down into lower-order wants	Conclusions for you
As a member of the audience of the campaign I want to...		
Have interesting things to share with friends that will get a lot of likes	Visually attractive content Content that expresses how I feel Content that presents my chosen self-image to others Easy to consume bits of information	Design informative but beautiful short posts (no longer than one paragraph of text and a single image) Test the content with the audience
Interact with the other members of the audience in a meaningful way	Work in groups on projects, solve real problems, share opinions and succeed together	Create reflective posts which engage people’s communicative and problem-solving skills





As a target of abuse the campaign is fighting against I want to...

Be heard and understood	Tell what happens and how it makes me feel. See that others go through similar things. Be safe.	Provide a platform, and possibly anonymity, to people who are targets of abuse who want to tell their stories. Create fictional characters based on real experiences of people who are targets of abuse.
Not feel alone	Have people to interact with Form a few meaningful social relationships.	Focus on creating a community by engaging in discussions, contests and creating a group/common forum. Take the activities to the offline world and create events.



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STAGE 3. CREATING CAMPAIGN CONTENT

After a careful planning stage based on the extended context of your campaign presented in previous stages now we may focus on creating the actual campaign content. Let's walk through the main steps of this process.

a. Start with creative brainstorming

Regardless of the form of brainstorming you want to engage in, be it Verbal or Visual it is of key importance to first invite individual contributions from your team, and not to discuss them before all the ideas are gathered! The reason is, you want to encourage people to be creative without fearing judgement. So, first select a problem, idea you want input on from your team members and then have everybody write down, or draw, their ideas in silence. This way you will use your team's creative potential to the fullest. Use the brainstorming cheat sheet below to guide you through this process and have your ideas more organised.



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As a target of abuse the campaign is fighting against I want to...

Verbal	Visual
<p>Three-column list</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. list concepts and terms related to your idea/design concept 2. list keywords related to an idea from the first column 3. write an idea/design concept that would be a direct opposite of your concept <p>Match three concepts together, one from each column, and sketch them, if you want.</p>	<p>Free mind mapping</p> <p>Quickly draw your central idea/question/problem/aspect in the middle and supplement it with as many connected ideas as you can, don't limit yourself or try to make a cohesive structure, let yourself represent the ideas visually, interconnect, cross out or make really far-fetched mind jumps.</p>
<p>Associations - Keywording</p> <p>Use a picture from a site visit/Google search of your key problem as the focal point and quickly jot down all the connotations you have when looking at it</p>	<p>Associations - Mood mapping</p> <p>Find a picture either from your site visit or via Google that represents the problem you want to explore. Next find pictures that are somehow related to it in your opinion to form a 'Mood Map'.</p>
<p>Neural network</p> <p>Write down the key keyword/phrase for the problem you are exploring. Now ask other students to give you random words and write them down around it leaving some space. Next try to find the things in the middle of this key problem and the words/things they have mentioned. Make an association path to connect each thing to another thing.</p>	<p>Speed-sketching</p> <p>Sketch a picture representing your idea then sketch pictures connected to each element of your idea then to each of these pictures, after five minutes swap your page with another member of your group and build upon their sketches adding new associations.</p>
<p>Opposites attract</p> <p>Write down a list of keywords. Next to each keyword write its direct opposite and one word which explains in what way this is an opposite. For example: Book — TV — medium, Job — Fun — enjoyment, speech — silence — presence</p>	<p>Timeline for the future / Aspirations</p> <p>Imagine your target group in future years, how has their situation improved gradually in relation to your problem? Draw a timeline and add ideas for future breakthroughs.</p> <p>Timeline for the past / Longings</p> <p>Imagine your target group in past years, how has their situation changed gradually in relation to your problem? Draw a timeline and add ideas for the past turning points.</p>
<p>Improvisation: Yes, and...</p> <p>Choose one possible solution and have each person describe an additional feature, but never disagree, no matter how silly or impossible it is just build upon the last suggestion adding it on.</p>	<p>Sketch a journey</p> <p>Quick sketch highlights of the problem on separate pieces of paper and group them together with what your groups came up with. Try to name them and find solutions.</p>
<p>Mad Libs</p> <p>You know the problem now, try to fill out this paragraph in as many different ways as you can: My solution is ___ which is similar to _____ because _____.</p>	<p>Cartoon people</p> <p>Draw some members of your target group doing something related to the problem and brainstorm what they could be saying within speech bubbles of your drawings.</p>





b. Choose your platform

Now that you have chosen the main goal of your campaign and, hopefully, learned a little bit about its stakeholders, including the audience and taken steps to plan your activities it is time for creating the campaign content. Campaign messages can be distributed through words, images, and video will heavily depend on which online platform or platforms are important. Don't rely on only one channel. But you don't have to be everywhere. It is better to try to create an online community.

In addition to such obvious channels as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Youtube, you might have a look at other platforms to spread the message about your campaign, such as

- Pinterest – if your campaign is heavily visual
- Reddit - can make posts about your campaign in the appropriate subreddits; browse other content in similar subreddits related to your topic or ask for a feedback and shape your campaign
- TripAdvisor - You can add your offline events connected to your campaign in your town to the Things to Do / Outdoor Activities section in your location.
- Change.org (or other petition portals at your location) - anyone can start a petition for free, then share the petition with friends, family and other supporters. Your petition could reach new audiences like journalists who source stories and cover campaigns, decision makers who can respond to the petition and people who could donate to your cause.
- Indiegogo (or other crowdfunding platforms) - Creating your campaign materials with the support of crowdfunding may be an option to consider if you have a clear and important message to share and need financial resources.
- Wordpress – creating a website might be a good idea as it can serve as a hub of our activity, bringing together all the communication channels with links and selected feeds. They can also introduce the team and goals in a coherent and concise way, giving a complete picture of the campaign. It is a place the users can be directed towards from other channels. Next, they allow you to store content and control the context it was created in, so that the original message is preserved, no matter what. Finally, they are, and will remain, in control of the campaign team, which is independent from dubious censorship algorithms of social media.





c. Devise a clear message

- Keep the entirety of your message short and simple and use short sentences. In communication, simple is more effective. Long and deep messages involve reflection, discussion, and are open to interpretation, and often they do not motivate us to act.
- Include the problem you want to address in your campaign in a way that shows it is important, but without exaggerating it, as exaggerated problems may seem too scary or funny and are easy to dismiss.
- Propose a solution to your problem that is rational and achievable.
- Have a clear call to action that your audience can restate easily after they have read your story.

To this, you can add a slogan, which will express the attitude that is to be presented through the elements below. It should be short, memorable and it does not have to stand on its own. It should be understood by people who know the context of the campaign. Remember to test it with your stakeholders!

d. Tell stories

- Tell stories, about real people, or about characters who could be real. People are wired to remember stories better and stories are something they are willing to share with others (like myths, fairy-tales, urban myths, moral tales, jokes, or memes)
- Choose a story that resonates with your target audience! Think of how it is relevant to their experience and why they may find it important, interesting or fresh.
- You may choose an existing story, something the audience already knows and has feelings towards and base your campaign on it - it could be a fairy tale or an urban legend, or even something inspired by a book or a TV series.
- Use active language (especially active verbs) and avoid passive voice at all costs!
- Avoid using too many adjectives, because they tend to lock interpretations - leave your stories open to the audiences' own experience.
- Show them things rather than tell them straight up - if something is beautiful, don't say it is, show it through others' reactions. If a person is good, don't simply say they are good, but show them doing good things.
- Aim to engage your audiences' emotions, and choose which emotions you want to engage - it is best to aim for clear emotions at any point in the story, but they do not have to be extreme. You may choose acceptance or interest instead of admiration.

To help you plan your story, try to fill out this chart:





- Where and when does the story take place?
- What is the exact location and time?

- In one sentence, what is your story about?

- What are the emotions the story should evoke?
- Name them.

- What is the tone of the story?

- Who tells your story?

- Who is the protagonist? (main character) What is their motivation?

- Who are the other characters?
- What are their motivations?

- What other elements are important?
- Are there any external forces?

- What is the basic conflict/problem in the story?

- What is the solution to this conflict/problem?

- What did the characters learn or how did they change as a result?

- What is the moral message?
- What truth does it show about the world?

e. Manage the conversations

The key aim of such campaigns is to get reactions, and sometimes these reactions will be positive and great, but sometimes they will be difficult, and both of these events should be treated as opportunities for growth and creating mutual understanding.

Your campaign is not just a content-creating machine, it is a dialogue between you and your audience. But to keep them engaged you need to not only start it, but also answer and drive it! At the same time, being part of the dialogue keeps you in control of your content as you can steer towards your intended goal and interpretation of your message. To do this, sometimes you have to react fast!





But just answering questions and monitoring if your message is not distorted is not enough. You have to be proactive and provoke conversations! Ask follow-up questions, get your audience engaged, share research and data to challenge peoples' opinions.

f. Be visual

Visual messages are easier to process than words, and they can more easily evoke emotions. They are accessible, sometimes even universally and across language barriers.

Once people see an image, they are more likely to believe it and share it, if it appeals to them. Symbols are widely used to convey universal meanings, for example in the form of pictograms. Most successful campaigns in general, including social campaigns, also rely on visuals. In your campaigns, as you do not have enough time to build up the meaning of your own symbol, you may attempt to use universally understood symbols to reach for meaning you want to convey. Consistency and storytelling are also important, so the images you use must not be a random set of appealing imagery, but rather they have to tell the story you want to share.

Moreover, visuals are processed almost without our effort, so the messages conveyed visually have a greater chance of reaching the target audience at all. Because of the high speed of consumption of content today, it is even more important to keep the visual message simple and to just try to tell one thing through it - a clear message that is easily understood, best without words. And when choosing your imagery don't forget to tell a coherent story - your campaign should have an easily identifiable visual style, even if a lot of different people work on it. You can achieve that through the use of leading colours, or choosing a colour palette to limit yourself to when you look at the visual. Similarly with fonts, try to choose two fonts that complement each other, rather than many different fonts, because excess creates chaos and clutter. And very importantly - leave some space around your visual elements - let them breathe so that your audience does not feel overwhelmed.





STAGE 4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

After a careful planning stage based on the extended context of your campaign presented in previous stages now we may focus on creating the actual campaign content. Let's walk through the main steps of this process.

Types and timing of evaluation

Evaluation should start with the first campaign planning steps, and not, as often assumed, after the campaign concludes. This involves steps as early as ideating and making decisions which challenges to address and which strengths to use. At this point it is done through the formative research helping devise an appropriate campaign strategy. Such pre evaluation tools, although usually applied at the beginning, can be used at any point of the campaign to analyse its alignment with initial goals and expected outcomes.

How to think about impact indicators in small social campaigns

As the main aim of social campaigns is to attempt to change convictions rooted in the society, ones that often are deeply ingrained in individual or group identities, it is very difficult to measure their impact and multiple international institutions and companies struggle to do just that. It is difficult, because such convictions change incrementally, and in the context of the society or community: at a very slow pace - so tangible changes may not be easily observed even until many years later. So, a more realistic measure of campaign impact is to evaluate which resources the campaign utilised, and to what extent, what risks it may have avoided, which areas the campaign addressed and what stakeholders it had the potential to reach and influence. This will help you hone your toolbox for the future, ensuring that you get acquainted with running online campaigns well and can reflect on their strong and weak points.



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While change of attitudes is a desired and very aspirational effect of such campaigns, it makes a poor campaign goal, as such a process takes a long time and is incredibly hard to measure. On a smaller scale, such change can be achieved by having people take actions or participate in experiences, which then require them to realign their thinking to protect their internal consistency. So, in our case the engagement in discussions, experiences and actions like this is what a campaign you are running ought to aim for, both for you, your team and other stakeholders.

The first step in measuring impact is the evaluation of the plausibility of reaching the outlined objectives given the engaged resources and prepared messages and then, realigning them to make them more achievable through defining these goals in terms of engagement, rather than less tangible measures, such as social change, which is a lengthy and resource-intensive process.

Resource mapping and analysis

Use resource mapping to identify resources that will be available and can be utilised during the campaign - this helps both to keep the scope of the campaign in check and to see the potential of some available, but unutilized resources. Even with few resources it is possible to organise a good campaign if they are used well.

Analysing sources

You need to make sure that all the campaign materials and messages are based on credible and unbiased sources. They ought to have no factual errors and bias, so that the audience can feel they are presented with good information from a worthy source. We recommend using a tool of analysing resources before the start of your campaign to gather reliable sources within your target area that you can build your message on. You can create your source list in a chart online, collaboratively with others and it will be a great resource you can keep for your future campaigns and activities, as well as subsequent steps of your campaign evaluation (mid-term and ex-post) to verify your assumptions.





Aiming for awareness and engagement on social media

Reaching a large audience (people who receive an impression of your content on their screen) during the campaign in social media requires lots of time, knowledge and budget for paid ads. Multiple online social platforms, such as Facebook or Instagram, have the tools that allow the campaign team, using a company page or profile, to view quantitative metrics to “measure” the engagement of their target audience. While these metrics are very often useful in providing some insights about the demographics of the viewers and the way they interact with the content, they require the content makers to spend money on ads to reach a greater number of people. Current social media algorithms have big impact on the reach of posts and it is really difficult and time consuming to work out organic growth and while “going viral” could help with this, it is key to know that most viral videos and campaigns took considerable resources and time to create, and are no longer happy accidents as their creators would like us to believe. Moreover, sometimes going viral may actually be harmful, depending on how virality was achieved and with what audience. For one, content that becomes viral is outside of our control and may be repurposed to carry different meanings we did not intend. Another issue is that audiences enjoy unique content, which is tailored to them and once it becomes mainstream, it no longer holds the appeal of something only a selected group can enjoy, engage with and understand.

So, one of the greatest challenges in achieving a larger reach is growing your audience from scratch. Thus, it is much better to have an NGO or another entity, such as a famous blogger or an organisation to host your campaign as they have an existing profile with some devoted followers who may share the new content. However, there is a potential pitfall here, as their following may not match your audiences’ intended profile. Let us say you want to engage a specific group of people, but these are not the people who you can access thanks to collaboration with some larger entity. Then, when deciding how to host your campaign it is key to remember that in most cases a sustained engagement of 20 people who match this profile, share your content and comment, versus 1000 passive followers who may like your posts, but who are not the intended audience, has a greater potential to create some impact.

If you have to start a new page or profile you have to adjust your goals and look at the quantitative metrics as more of a guideline in terms of the attractiveness of your campaign to the audience you were able to reach, as it is unlikely your campaign will gain a following quickly, and even more unlikely, that the people who follow your page or profile will belong to your intended audience - it is best to treat it like an experiment to find your authentic voice and engage with these media. Then, it can also be a platform where your work will remain and be showcased if you want to create a similar campaign in the future in collaboration with others or it may be something you decide to build on later on.





Useful to measure and evaluate for short online campaigns

- the alignment of campaign goal and its messages
- types of stakeholders the campaign reached
- the utilisation of available resources
- team learning and participation in the campaign

May be measured, but requires resources and it may be difficult to discover a direct causal relationship

- engagement of target audience in discussion, experiences and campaign activities
- types of impact beyond the expected outcomes
- social media indicator

Difficult to measure due to resources, time-span and scope

- direct social impact
- changes in attitudes

Tools for ON GOING EVALUATION & monitoring

a. GAMES part 2: ongoing evaluation of campaign communication strategy tool

You need to evaluate if your campaign vision is in alignment with your actions, including key information about your campaign and compare it with your previous answers formulated at the planning stage. This is the space to include the answers you agreed on previously (with any modifications resulting from the previous evaluation), so that you may compare them to the current reality of your campaign.





Goal

- Is your goal still get-at-able?
- Is your goal still SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound)? If answers are not clear, review your goal.

Audience

- Are people from your target group watching/reading your campaign content?
- Check your web and social media and analytics reports

Messenger

- Is your messenger accepted and believed by your target group?
- Analyse reactions in social media (likes and comments).

Environment

- Is the context different or still the same?
- What else is going on?

Story

- Do your audience understand what you want from them?
- Are you getting any action from your audience?
- Create Google alerts and hashtags to follow.
- Analyse reactions in social media (likes, comments and shares of your content).

b. Analysing campaign audience discourse

When you conduct a campaign you aim to create engagement, which means shares and comments that can help you understand your audience and better plan your communications in the future and in each specific case, because engagement is a two-way street, if someone responds to your campaign you ought to somehow react to this, it may be as simple as liking their comment, but it can also mean engaging in a discussion or encouraging them to share your content, and for this, you need to understand your audience. When you receive messages or comments to your campaign materials try to understand where they are coming from. Sometimes, if these are negative it is good to analyse them before you answer.

You may use this chart to help you:



CONTEXT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was it written/created from an open or anonymous account? • Is it formal or informal? 	
AUTHOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who created it? • Did they act alone? • Was it edited? 	
AUTHOR - Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What else has the author commented on? 	
KEY CODING CATEGORIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What themes appear in the comment/material? 	
STRUCTURE - ORDER & MIX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What themes appear together? • Are there whole segments on the same topic? • What other topics appear? 	
KEY NOUNS & THEIR MODIFIERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What words, especially adjectives, are used together with our key terms and messages? 	
CULTURAL REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What figures of authority, cultural icons, quotes, memes are used? 	
LINGUISTIC MECHANISMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the tenses used? Past, future, or present? • Are the connotations in general positive or negative? • Are there any rhetorical figures, like questions, metaphors or proverbs? Does the text state opinions or facts? How do you know it? 	
SOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sources do they refer to? • Do they have any data to support their views? • Can you ask them to back their views with data? 	
INTERPRETATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the goal of this text? • Who benefits from it? • Who loses because of it? • What may be the motivation of the person writing it? 	
IMPACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was anything done/said in response or as a result of it? Did it engage other users? What will you do to mitigate negative impact? 	





b. *DIAGNOSING* your campaign health

Use this tool if you are worried that some of the campaign messages miss their mark or to discuss any other things that you feel could be improved. Write down things that worry you and things that could be improved and ask the other team members to do the same before your team meeting. During the team meeting, collect them all together to see if any of them repeat. If so, try to “diagnose” them first and then propose a cure.

SYMPTOM	DIAGNOSIS	EXAMPLE CURE
Nobody liked a certain post	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did you share it in other places?• Did the post have a picture?• Was the post brief?	After a few posts you can look back at them and see which of them generated more interest, likes and shares, and which of them remained unnoticed.
There is no discussion under a post	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did the post invite a discussion?• Is the audience diverse enough to warrant a discussion?	Try to include a clear “call to action” in your post if your intention is to generate a discussion.
Nobody shares the posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What could be the motivation of people to share your posts?• In what way are they interesting?	Can you mobilise your network to help you spread the word?
Other things you are worried about...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What may be the reason they happen?• What can you do to make them less common?• What would be their opposite?• How to achieve this opposite state?	Depends on the nature of the challenge

Tools for ON GOING EVALUATION & monitoring

Parallel to the previous GAMES tools after the end of the campaign discuss how and to what extent you have managed to meet your objectives. Below we present ex post evaluation questions to be included into GAMES chart and compared with initial chart after the end of the campaign:





Goal

- Did you achieve your goal?
- Did you communicate your message clearly?
- Was there a clear call to action that the audience were to respond to?
- What was it?
- What did your audience do?

Audience

- Did you reach your target audience?
- Which social media did you use?
- Which were the most relevant to reach the target audience?
- Which were the most relevant to engage the target audience?
- What kinds of messages were the most engaging?

Messenger

- Did you choose the right messenger?
- Was the messenger engaged?
- If not, why not?

Environment

- How receptive was the environment to your message?
- Were there any messages that interfered with your campaign?

Story

- If you were to create the campaign today would you have chosen the same story to tell? The same slogan? If not, how and why would it be different?
- Did the call to action lead your audience to the required action?

For best results, evaluation ought to be based on a triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methods as well as desk research involving review of the campaign materials by the stakeholders. However, engaging in any evaluative activities is a worthwhile action because otherwise we are assuming knowledge about the impact of the campaigns without proof, and we pass on any chance to improve it and learn from it.





There are many methods of evaluation, in these guidelines we mention only some of them, which we consider easy to use with great learning outcomes, but the repertoire of available tools is impressive, as you may choose, for example, from:

Qualitative methods:

- peer observation sheets
- reviews and feedback on the campaign content (by internal and external stakeholders),
- participatory observation of your target audience
- individual interviews with the team members, audience and other stakeholders
- emotional and practical maps
- reflective questions (for example structured in a chart)
- reflective statements on the assumed goals of the campaign and the objectives achieved as well as conclusions for the further development strategy
- debate and workshop conclusions

Quantitative methods:

- surveys filled out both online and in-person,
- self-evaluation and course evaluation ratings and checklists

Desk research:

- reviews of all campaign materials created to date, especially in terms of its discourse
- comparative analysis of the effects of campaign communications

To sum up, it is important to keep in mind that evaluation shall be happening not only after completion of the campaign. It is a crucial matter that shall be taken into consideration by you and your team at every stage of campaign planning and implementation.

Evaluation helps improve your message and communication arrangements by helping you direct your efforts and letting you understand your successes and failures through engaging in meaningful reflection, team interaction and analyses. To conduct evaluative activities, one does not need a large team, or a dedicated evaluator as the key to evaluation is honest discovery, where all stakeholders engage in open communication and ponder both their successes and failures from their various perspectives. These can be achieved thanks to the tools presented above, which will guide you through individual and team self-assessment activities to help structure your thinking and take steps towards improving any aspects of the campaign where you may be struggling, and to multiply its strengths, to focus on the messages and impacts you are most proud of.



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HANDFUL TOOLS TO USE

1.Planning

- Xtensio – create your audience persona

1.Tools for team collaboration

- Trello;
- Discord

1.Content creation

- Canva
- DesignBold
- Adobe Lightroom Mobile
- OpenShot Video Editor
- Free Video Flip and Rotate
- Filmora FREE Online Meme Maker
- Unfold
- OpenShot

