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EX POST PAPER

RAN C&N Academy 'How to create, implement and evaluate an effective P/CVE communications campaign'

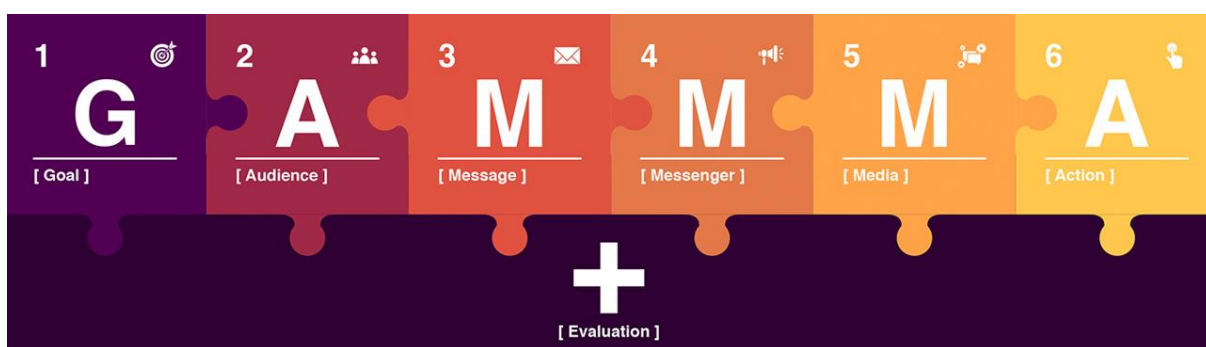
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Effective Narratives: Updating the GAMMMA+ model

The RAN Communication and Narratives working group (RAN C&N) has promoted the GAMMMA+ model since December 2017 as a practical guideline for carrying out effective alternative and counter narrative (AN /CN) campaigns. Since then, the GAMMMA+ model has served practitioners from all over the European Union as a tool when planning and implementing communications campaigns. After two years and based on feedback and insights from practitioners at the RAN C&N Academy in November 2019, it is time to update the model in the format of this ex-post paper.

Introduction

The GAMMMA+ model addresses all key elements that need to be taken into account when setting up an effective communication campaign. It comprises the following key elements: Goal, Audience, Message, Messenger, Media, Action plus Monitoring and Evaluation. It combines key elements and lessons learned from RAN C&N meetings with an overview of relevant research. The model does not only aims at helping practitioners to **increase the impact** of the campaign, be it online and offline; GAMMMA+ also addresses the risks of well-intended campaigns **doing harm** by entering a field of political or social polarisation or conflict without being aware of the potential unintended negative consequences this may have. For example, when working to increase the resilience of a specific target audience against extremist propaganda and recruitment, be aware that you might be perceived by the same audience as stereotyping and mistrusting this group. To avoid this, make sure you have the necessary in-depth understanding of the sensitivities and concerns of your target audience by having someone from that audience on your team or by partnering with a local organisation that does, so as not to foster polarisation inadvertently.



While the [2017 GAMMMA+ issue paper](#) already provides quite a comprehensive overview of the elements that are key when setting up a CN/AN campaign, it became clear that many campaigns we looked at since then lack a robust “Theory of Change” (ToC). ToCs examine explicit drivers and root causes of violent extremism in the hyper-local context of your target audience and explain the causal assumptions of why and how the campaign would achieve its aim.

We therefore added a “Theory of Change” segment, as well as some other additional learnings, to the GAMMMA+ model.

Challenges of practitioners – RAN GAMMMA+ Essentials

Over the years, the C&N working group learned that an effective AN/CN campaign needs to entail the following essentials:

1. Effective communication campaigns have an **explicit theory of change** on how their intervention aims to foster change;
2. The overall **goals** have been broken down into clear, realistic and measurable objectives.
3. The team has an in-depth understanding of the campaign’s **target audience**. This cannot be achieved by desk-research and surveys only. You need members of the target audience on your team. Or you should partner with an organisation that does. If that is not possible, please look for an audience you can really understand!
4. The promoted **messages** are relevant and resonate with the needs of target audience, and the target audience considers the **messengers** credible.
5. The campaign works with the target audience’s preferred **medium** or online platforms, and also aims at reaching out to the audience offline.
6. Campaigns offer a **call to action** for those wishing to become involved in the issue at hand, which will also facilitate monitoring and evaluation.
7. Campaigns aiming at changing minds and behaviours need to offer opportunities for **sustained dialogue** (both online and offline). Narrative campaigns in the form of monologues are unlikely to meet the needs of an audience that wants to talk, or is upset or outraged about a real or perceived injustice.

See if you can learn from the work of others - check the [RAN collection for inspiring practices](#), the [material for the Civil Society Empowerment Programme](#), or for example, the [Hedayah Counter Narrative Library](#) or the [study for the EP LIBE Committee on Countering Terrorist Narratives](#).

8. Campaigns should design and implement **monitoring and evaluation (M&E)** components from the planning phase of the campaign onwards to adjust ongoing activities if needed, and once completed, can learn whether the campaign had the desired impact and learn.
9. Campaigns that produce a **constant stream of content** for their target audience to interact with increase their chances of having an impact. Authenticity and quantity are more relevant than high-end technical quality.
10. **Prepare for success** in case your campaign resonates with a lot of people or triggers the interest of media, taking into consideration all security risks for your organisation and partners that publicity entails.

Trial and error – some examples of what can go wrong during a campaign



Reinforcing conspiracy theories: A campaign which aimed at debunking conspiracy theories produced a video which showed different conspiracy theories, to attract the interest of the target group. In the second part of the 2-minute video, humour was introduced to make people rethink their beliefs. It turned out that the videos reached their target audience; unfortunately, most did not watch the video to the end to see the twist towards critical thinking.

Lesson: Know how much time your target audience spends watching videos on average and make sure your key message is being delivered within that time frame.



Getting the wrong answers: A campaign was conducting a survey about an issue they wanted to address during a time of polarised debates. The questions in the survey were quite direct and led people to give socially desirable answers (Hawthorne effect), which gave the impression that there was no real problem.

Lesson: Ask indirect questions, examining your key interest from different angles.



Becoming invisible: A campaign that used similar postings and videos to create a coherent image/brand realised that the platform's algorithms did not rate their content 'newsworthy' after a while and therefore did not show it in the timeline of the target audience any more.

Lesson: Make sure your products vary enough to be categorised as 'new' by the platform – reach out to the specific social media company for advice or check the [A to Z of a successful online campaign](#).



Using the wrong medium: While your audience might be on Facebook mostly to stay in contact with their grandmother, for example, they might get their news from YouTube. Conversely, some target groups use Facebook for political discussion and mostly use YouTube to watch cat videos.

Lesson: Understand where your target audience gets the information relating to your campaign from.

1

G

[Goal]

GOAL

What do you really want to achieve? What are your objectives? What is success to you (and your donors)? What is your Theory of Change?

When planning a campaign, you must be clear about what you wish to achieve and what your unique capability is. Yet many people have a hard time breaking down their overall goals into concrete and measurable objectives. But how can you measure your success if you are not certain what your success should look like? Setting **clear, realistic and measurable goals** helps you to clarify the resources, time, staff and funds required to successfully carry out your campaign. These objectives and goals should be determined before starting the campaign in order to be able to properly evaluate and measure impact. Keep in mind that a goal is not a **vision**: A vision is the long-term destination that you want to get to, and the goals are the steps you need to take to get there.

GOAL-DEFINING PROCESS

GOAL

Increase the number of calls/emails from your audience to your prevention/exit website/helpline by 50% within 6 weeks; have 20 conversations, 50% of which will lead to increased participation in your event;



WHO

Males and females, aged 16 to 23, who follow/are members of online groups that promote far-right extremist ideologies and far-right music and far-right fashion/brands (narrow down the target audience);



WHERE

They reside in geographically defined radicalisation hubs that have had a disproportionately high number of extremists in the last 3 years (further defined target audience);



HOW

Use curiosity/mystery/redirection/humour/facts and push videos/memes/posters into their online echo-chambers. This will stimulate them to comment/share/like/want to talk and might have an impact on their thinking/feeling, because of reasons X, Y, Z, etc. (theory of change).



An example of why unclearly defined goals are problematic can be found in the case study below:

Case study



Target audience: 18-25-year-olds at risk of being radicalised in cities.



Goal: Goals and objectives were not clearly defined. Broadly, the purpose was to undermine extremist propaganda through humour.



Results/Impact: Only short-term outcomes (likes/shares/comments) were measured. The campaign achieved sustained engagement with the audience but didn't have indicators or tools to measure it. In particular, the nature of the engagement (positive/negative/changing) wasn't monitored through sentiment analysis.



Lessons: The target audience might be too broad and not specific enough (what does "at risk" mean?). Set clear goals and develop measurable indicators whenever possible. Gather all comments and feedback and use sentiment analysis software to see whether people have reacted positively or negatively and whether you might have an impact on changing attitudes. Consider reaching out to some individuals/profiles who commented directly, to learn about their feedback in more depth and to see if they might like to get further involved.

To help developing a realistic goal, it is highly recommended to develop a **Theory of Change**, which will explain why you think your intervention will work, whom it will affect, how, and in what way.



THEORY OF CHANGE

Why should your target audience change their minds due to your intervention?

The Theory of Change (ToC) is a key element in establishing why your objectives are realistic and achievable. Although the name may suggest it is just a set of ideas, a proper ToC is based on **sound research and an in-depth understanding of your target audience**. Many organisations that are implementing PVE programmes (online or offline) work from an **implicit** theory of change, assuming, for example, that including more youth to the political process will help prevent violent extremism. But while fostering social or political inclusion is essential for open and safe societies, PVE budgets and expertise

should only be deployed **IF** a lack of inclusion **IS** actually a cause of violent extremism in the targeted hyper-local context (village/neighbourhood/community/online echo chamber) relevant to your audience.

Formulating an **explicit** Theory of Change – based on empirical research, in-depth exchanges with your target audience, and reasons you hope to foster change through your intervention to produce intended outcomes and impacts – is therefore a crucial starting point when setting up a communications campaign. This should lay out in detail the **hyper-local context and the issue at hand** of your target audience and should therefore contain direct input from members of that audience that you are trying to communicate with. A ToC always serves as a **learning process**, in which you reflect continuously on the results of your interventions.

For more details on how to develop a ToC, please consult the [UNDP Improving the Impact of Preventing Violent Extremism Programming: A Toolkit for Design, Monitoring and Evaluation \(2018\)](#), the [Hivos ToC Guidelines, Theory of Change, Thinking in Practice, 2015](#) and the [Alliance for Peacebuilding – Policy Brief on Theory of Change, 2015](#)

Examples of Theory of Change starting-point assumptions

- IF a (mis)understanding of religious texts is a key driver in the radicalisation process, THEN religious instruction for the “correct” view and knowledge of “other” religions/ideas can be effective.
- IF adventure-seeking, need for recognition or sense of isolation are push factors, THEN offering alternative ways of engagement (sports, music, arts) can be effective.
- IF grooming by local extremists is present, THEN focusing on credible, empowering alternative voices and groups from within the community can be effective.

Monitoring and Evaluations aspects related to GOAL

- It is key to **define up front** how you are planning to measure the campaign’s sustainability. By establishing tangible indicators up front with the donor, they may be more likely to support potential actions beyond the project structure.
- Have a clear **logic model**: A logic model is a schematic or visual representation of your Theory of Change. It helps you to structure your intervention by connecting all relevant elements in a visual framework. Clearly linking your call to action to the different outputs and outcomes can help you to measure success. **Note**: There is a tendency to jump straight to content, without clearly knowing how and if the effort is measurable. Establishing a clear logic model should be the first step: If you are still struggling with connecting all elements, it is not there yet. An example of a fictional logic model can be found below.

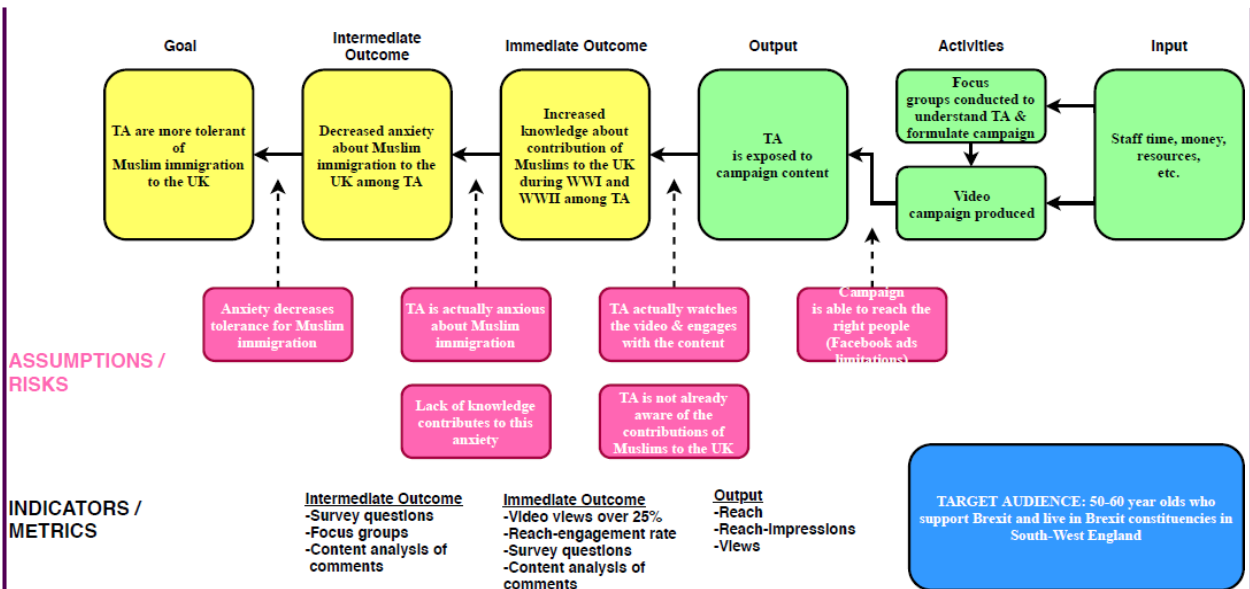


Figure 1: Fictional example of logic model, by Zuzanna Pogorzelska. Institute for Strategic Dialogue (2019).

GOAL – What do you need to know?

Do you understand the root causes of and contributing factors to the radicalisation processes of your target audience? Have you distinguished between two targets: whether your aim is to strengthen their resilience or to counter extremist content? Have you identified clear, realistic and measurable indicators in this process, so as to understand the response of your audience? Are you using a 'Theory of Change' that explains why you think your intervention will work, on whom, how and in what way? Have you got a clear logic model to structure your intervention on?

2



A

[Audience]

Audience

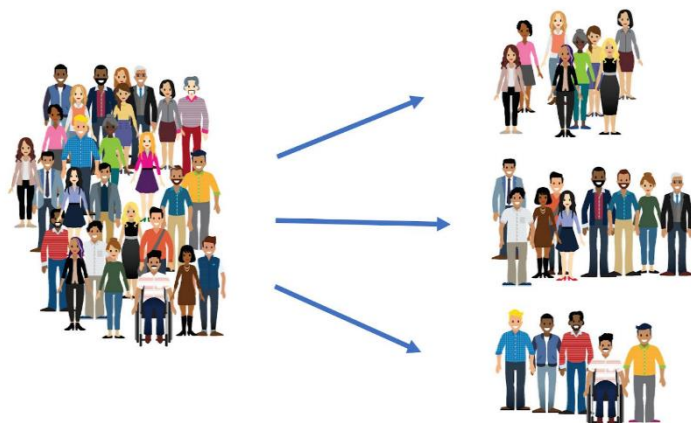
What are the key characteristics of your audience? What are they thinking and how do they behave? In what context are they living? What language do they use? Why would they interact with you?

One of the key mistakes that people tend to make is to identify their audience merely based on general demographic statistics. Not knowing your target audience directly and well enough and what they believe are will result in lack of response to a campaign, most likely render it ineffective. Having an in-depth understanding of your target **audience's** priorities, how and where they communicate with each other, and why they are likely to react to your campaign is the foundation of every intervention. Therefore, investing enough time in this is key. Answering the questions in the overview below can help to hyper-target your audience:

GENERAL	VITAL STATISTICS How many people are like this? Trends? Indices and comparisons?	WHO THEY ARE Key economic or demographic characteristics (individuals age, sex etc.)		GENERAL LIFESTYLE How they live. What they like doing. Priorities. Aspirations. Consumer trends. Attitudes to government/life in general.		
	THIS AREA / ISSUE	NEEDS, BENEFITS & MOTIVATIONS Rational needs, emotional or hidden needs. What motivates them?		BEHAVIOUR – WHAT THEY DO What drives and triggers action? Where do they do what they do? How frequently? Barriers to doing/thinking? Key words / language used?		
INFLUENCERS Who or what influences them? Why? (See also 'Media', below.)		BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES Thoughts, beliefs, attitudes to this? What values do they hold that relate to the issue? What makes them feel good? Bad? Why?				
MEDIA	GETTING INFORMATION & MESSAGES				WHO INFLUENCES THEM	
	Place, time & how they get info	How much info they want/need	Where they get it from-media used	When & where they're most receptive?	Who they do/ don't listen to & respect	Who delivers for them? In contact with?

AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

Audience segmentation is a statistical analysis technique that can help to identify different clusters of the population with specific needs, attitudes and values and is therefore a useful tool when aiming for effective communication efforts. Within each cluster or group, the audience shares the same opinions and values. These opinions are different from other clusters/groups. The advantage of audience segmentation is that it helps strategists and communication experts to break down the target audience, prioritise propositions and develop personalised and relevant messages to engage with different audiences. To do this, the questions from the quantitative results which provide insight into how communications can help could be fed into the segmentation. The questions therefore need to be carefully thought out, with a focus on how communications can play a useful role in the objective.



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COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID

Carrying out research on one's target audience is key but this does not necessarily mean you have understood your audience. Overestimating one's capacity to understand the complexity of an audience is a common error. In the best-case scenario following such an error, you might have lost or failed to capture your audience; in the worst-case scenario, you might have introduced extremist propaganda to an audience that was indifferent to it prior to your campaign. Additionally, you want to avoid attracting unintended or even disruptive audiences. You can use **paid advertisements** to hyper-target certain groups. Use your research to identify proxies as indicators.

Audience – What do you need to know?

Can you define the key characteristics of your audience members? Can you narrow down and clearly identify their age range, gender, cultural background, 'group language' and place of residence? Do you understand why they would care about your intervention, why they would interact with you? Do you understand what could change their thinking and behaviour? Where do they get their information from? Where are their echo chambers that you need to access with your message? If your aim is to reinforce the resilience of your audience, understanding them also means understanding their vulnerabilities. What makes them vulnerable?

3



M

[Message]

Message

How do you ensure that your target audience responds to your message?

The messages promoted by your campaign need to be highly relevant to the target audience in order for your campaign to be effective. Your aim is to stimulate people's thoughts and feelings, and maybe even elicit a shift in their opinions and behaviour, right? Then your **narrative needs to resonate with the target audiences' needs**. It must be relevant to them and carry social currency. For example, sharing your message with others could make them look smart or funny. Why else would they spread the word, or listen to you? As mentioned, narrative campaigns in the form of monologues are unlikely to meet the needs of an audience that wants to talk, or is upset or outraged about a real or perceived injustice. Campaigns that produce a **constant stream of content** inviting interaction with their target audience increases the messages' chances of having an impact. **Authenticity** and **quantity** are in this case more relevant than technical quality.

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOUR MESSAGE WILL RESONATE?

We recommend observing the responses of a small sample of your target audience before rolling out your full-scale campaign. If you don't have team members who are close to your target audience, **test your message** using a focus group comprising members of your audience or people very close to your audience. This is easily done in **low-budget** campaigns; plan a walk-in hour for relevant local community representatives. You can also test your message on a small scale by initiating targeted discussions in an online forum frequented by your audience. Check the feedback you receive and adjust your message if, for example, the wrong audience responds or the response is very different from what you had hoped. Note that explicit messages tend to work better with already convinced populations, whereas implicit, non-confrontational messages work better with people who are not yet convinced of your message.

COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID

Be aware of 'the backfire effect'. Research shows that using confrontational approaches (fact-based or emotional) might strengthen the convictions of your target audience. This is especially the case if your message is perceived as an attack on the core values or identity of the individual or its in-group. See [The Debunking Handbook](#) for more information. This might also lead to the misuse of your campaign. It's important to mitigate the situation and, above all, to [protect the people involved in the campaign](#).

Message – What do you need to know?

Why would your audience members care about your message? Why would they share it with others and make it a topic of conversation? Are you using the appropriate language style, along with dialect(s) and slang? Do you build on keywords and terms that they often use themselves? Are you aware of the risks of miscommunication? Why would your message change their thinking and behaviour?

4



M

[Messenger]

Messenger

Who are the Messengers that are credible to the target audience?

People are more likely to listen to someone they can relate to and who speaks the same language. There are many potential messengers considered credible by a specific target audience: [‘victims’](#), [informal actors](#) such as family members, [‘formers’](#), celebrities/influencers, regular peers or [community leaders](#). Whether a **messenger** is credible can only be decided by the target audience itself.

Most groups, communities or milieus have their own 'language', narratives, signs and (sub-) cultures. Local alternative or counter-narratives from communities struggling with extremism are therefore more likely to be effective than interventions from well-intended outsiders. Often, local actors or civil society organisations working in specific neighbourhoods can provide relevant messages and credible messengers. It is crucial to have a member of your target audience in your campaign team to check whether your messengers are indeed credible to your target audience. If this is not the case, make sure to invite them to participate or to contribute to your campaign, or even ask them to partner with you.

Different audience, different information

Although it is key that your messages and the messengers are credible, consistent, compelling and connected to each other, this does not mean that they have to be the same individuals across board. It is logical to have multiple credible voices for different threads of information and messages, as different audiences respond to different messages and messengers.

COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID

Ill-prepared interventions might lead to unintended consequences. If really understanding the target audience seems too complex and time-consuming, we strongly urge you to consider addressing a target audience which better matches your understanding and your team's expertise.

Messenger – What do you need to know?

Why should your target audience listen to, believe and trust your messenger? Are there any messenger-related risks to your organisation (e.g. reputation or credibility) or to the messenger himself/herself (e.g. trolling or security concerns)?

5



M

[Media]

Medium

What media does your target audience get its information from?

To reach your target audience directly, you need to know **which media** or other means its members use to communicate with each other and how they receive information. Directing your target audience to your preferred platform is an option, but it is much more effective to **address them where they are**. Don't shy away from platforms you've never used: the [RAN C&N collection of accessible and user-friendly toolkits and tutorials](#) can help

you familiarise yourself with various platforms. Your research, in coordination with your focus group, will determine which medium is most likely to be effective for reaching your target audience. It is important to determine the preferred medium early in the process, as this will affect the type of content you produce.

COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID

Certain social media platforms are more familiar to you, your colleagues, partners or funders than other platforms. For example, many projects use Facebook, Twitter or YouTube as their main social media outlets, despite knowing that their target audience is not particularly active there and in fact prefers to use WhatsApp, Snapchat, Telegram or Reddit. If you do not use the platform(s) your target audience is using, you will probably not be heard.

Medium – What do you need to know?

How does your target audience communicate? Where do its members get their information from, and where are their echo chambers? What is your capacity in terms of budget and time for becoming active on more than one platforms, or offline? Will you produce content for mobile screens or for PC screens, including sound or subtitles? How can you ensure your campaign does not get hijacked by audiences outside your target group?

6

A

[Action]

Call to Action

How could online communication efforts supplement offline work? What is needed for an effective call-to-action? How can you get people to act?

Effective campaigns hover around online-offline engagement and try to achieve **behavioural change**. By both kinds of engagement, you create an opportunity for sustained dialogue with those in the audience who wish to talk. Most major extremist narratives make the claim that 'your' people are suffering from a great injustice and that you should help them in any way you can. Those who feel they belong to the suffering in-group and sympathise with these narratives often feel an urge to act. They may be angry or upset, so only telling them what not to do will have little or even an unintended effect (see 'the backfire effect'). Campaigns should therefore offer a [call to action](#) for those wishing to become involved in the issue at hand; this will facilitate monitoring and evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS WHEN FORMULATING A CALL TO ACTION

When thinking about which call to action you want to issue, the following things can be helpful:

- Use strong command verbs to introduce your call to action;
- Keep it simple;
- Use words that provoke emotional responses;
- Try addressing people directly;
- Give a reason WHY people should do what you want them to do;
- Stimulate a feeling of 'missing out' so people will want to participate;
- Adjust the call to action to the platform your message is disseminated on;
- Ask yourself: Is my call to action clear, feasible and easy to do?

Keep in mind that if your aim is behavioural change, your call to action should require more than a single donation or sharing of your post. If you want to know whether your campaign has contributed to a behavioural change or way of thinking, there should be a **follow-up** on the call to action to keep engagement with the target audience going. For example, if your call to action is to organise a demonstration, you can ask the target audience to share the outcomes of that demonstration and get an idea of the impact your campaign has had. Where possible, try to ensure continuity after the campaign, to keep creating impact on society.

Your call to action should build on the previous elements of the GAMMMA+ model to be effective. It should be linked to the goal of your campaign and help you achieve that, resonate with your audience, and use the right medium message and a credible messenger if you want your target audience to actually do something.

Examples of calls to action

Help us and donate! Ask your target audience to donate money for a shared cause. Recommend trusted organisations.

Volunteer! Ask your target audience to take action as volunteers in trusted organisations that work on the issues they most care about. Provide them with information on how to do this.

Participate!

Organise a demonstration, talk or other kind of public event, which you can invite your audience to join.

Talk to us!

Providing a phone number or website that encourages people to call or visit to obtain help is an effective way of connecting with your target audience

COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID

Even though you probably have a vision of what you ideally wish your target audience would do, remember that it's about coming up with a call to action that will **resonate with the audience**. Resist coming up with a call to action that is 'a bridge too far' of what is realistic for your audience. Your call can be a first step in coming to contact with them and working from there. Also keep in mind that people are only willing to engage if there is a 'benefit' for them to do so. This benefit could be **social currency**, e.g. following your call to action may make someone look or feel smart, funny or relevant. Understanding your audience is key here too, as understanding the social currency at play can help you use this in your favour.

Call to Action – What do you need to know?

Which key issues does your audience care about? What kind of emotional response will your audience have to the issues you are addressing? Which calls to action resonate with your audience members' emotions and make it possible to channel some of their feelings into productive actions? Is the call to action clear, feasible and easy to do for your target audience? How do the online and offline worlds interact in your CTA? How will you keep track of who engages with your call to action? How is the CTA related to your goal?



[Evaluation]

Monitoring and Evaluation

What is the campaign's output, outcome and impact? What are key elements when assessing the impact of your campaign? What offline calls to action did you do and how do you know whether your campaign resulted in behavioural change? What tools and methods can be used for this? How will you communicate your results to key stakeholders?

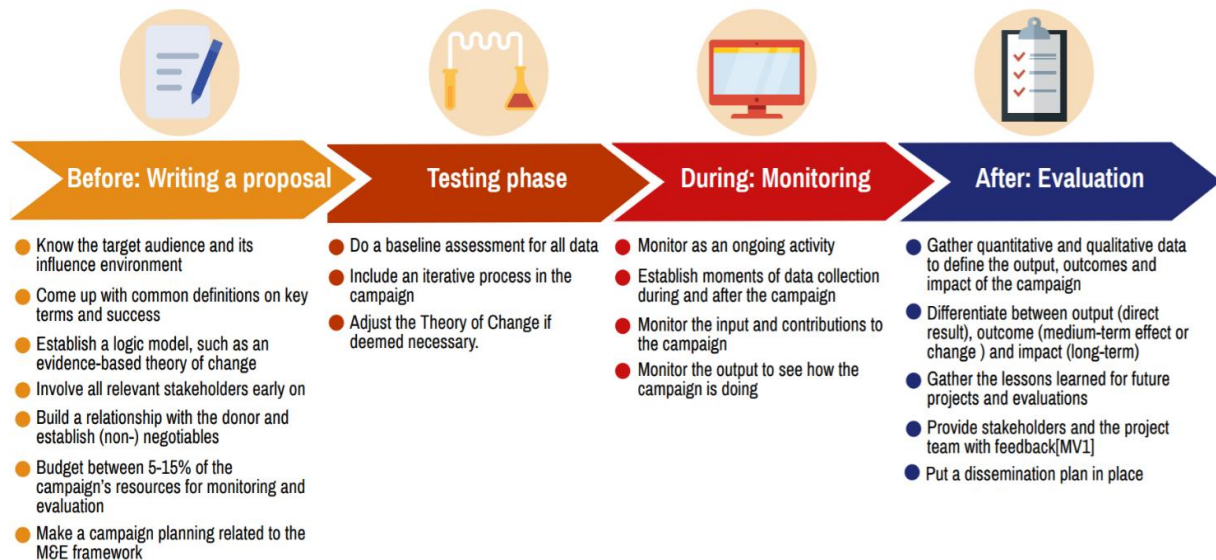
[Monitoring and evaluation](#) is the ongoing activity that allows you to keep track of how the campaign is doing. Having a clear M&E from the beginning and throughout the campaign is the only way to ensure you can quickly adapt your campaign to changing or unforeseen circumstances, and will also help you assess whether your goals have been reached, thus increasing the effectiveness of the campaign down the line. Evaluation is not something you start with at the end; it must be factored in before you start. On the contrary, ensure you **invest enough money and time in the design phase of your campaign** to include research, piloting or testing and reiteration before launching the campaign. Include the donor of the campaign to establish a realistic M&E framework and manage expectations of what the campaign can achieve. Monitoring and evaluation enable you to demonstrate the reach, performance and impact of your campaign to third parties. This may be key when you apply for funding or

seek to convince stakeholders to scale up your campaign. Accountability and Learning are two elements that follow from M&E.

DIFFERENT PHASES

Monitoring and evaluation for alternative or counternarrative campaigns can be roughly divided into four phases: **before, testing, during** and **after**. The GAMMMA+ model elements are already elaborated upon in the 'before' phase, when the project proposal is being written and the campaign (partially) designed. This feeds into the testing phase, when the project can be tested on a small scale. After adjusting some elements where necessary, the monitoring comes in place during the period when the campaign becomes active. After the campaign, it is then time to evaluate and share the lessons learned with donors and possibly a broader audience. The key elements of M&E for each phase are summarised in the figure below. More detailed information can be found in the [RAN ex post paper Monitoring & Evaluating counter- and alternative narrative campaigns](#).

Think about how you will measure and analyse the data before you start the campaign. Will you do a quantitative or qualitative analysis, or a mix? You can conduct surveys, (manually) analyse comments and make a coding set, and you can measure the reach of your campaign (views, clicks), resonance, engagement, video retention rates, and the response to your call to action. Depending on available resources, you will probably need to choose beforehand how, what and when to measure and analyse.



COMMON ERRORS TO AVOID

- Don't think of M&E as a 'necessary evil' that you need to do at the end. A robust M&E framework will really help you to reach your goal and understand which elements have led to this success (or failure).
- Monitoring & Evaluating is not a one-time effort; continual **learning and adjusting is key**.
- M&E can be done by someone from within or outside of your organisation – in any case, ensure that there is enough time and budget to dedicate a person to this task.
- Remember that you wish to measure a change in behaviour or thinking. Therefore, try to do a baseline assessment of some sort before you begin; this will allow you to compare the behaviour or situation before, during, and after your campaign.

Monitoring & Evaluation – What do you need to know?

Which indicators of success can you measure? What is the best way to monitor these indicators, so you can adjust the campaign if necessary? Have you identified [and established//pls CH]clear, realistic and measurable indicators that allow for understanding the response of your audience? How will you communicate the outcomes of your evaluation to other stakeholders?

Annex 1: Relevant Research

Table 1 presents relevant studies from the fields of political science, sociology, anthropology, psychology and neuroscience.

Table 1 Relevant studies and key findings

	Research title	Key findings for effective alternative narratives and counter-narratives
1	Hornik, R., Jacobsohn, L., Orwin, R., Piesse, A., & Kalton, G. (2008). Effects of the national youth anti-drug media campaign on youths. <i>American Journal of Public Health, 98</i> (12), 2229-2236.	<p>Do no harm; don't spread propaganda This study indicates that making people, and youth in particular, aware of something that authorities consider inappropriate or harmful may generate (more) interest in the issue instead of dissuading them.</p> <p>Link: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2636541/</p>
2	Cook, J., & Lewandowsky, S. (2011). <i>The Debunking Handbook</i> . St. Lucia, Australia: University of Queensland	<p>Backfire effect Confrontational approaches (fact-based or emotional) will most likely strengthen the convictions of those you try to 'reason with'. This is especially the case when the target audience feels that their core values or identity are under attack from your campaign.</p> <p>Quantity of messages A regular stream of messages has a higher likelihood of being effective. This research indicates that receiving about 30 % of alternative/counter messages of one's information stream is necessary to (help) change someone's mind.</p> <p>Link: https://www.skepticalscience.com/docs/Debunking_Handbook.pdf</p>
3	Chan, M. P. S., Jones, C. R., Hall Jamieson, K., & Albarracín, D. (2017). Debunking: a meta-analysis of the psychological efficacy of messages countering misinformation. <i>Psychological science, 28</i> (11), 1531-1546.	<p>Do no harm; don't spread propaganda Misinformation/propaganda should not be repeated unless incorporated as part of a comprehensive pedagogical concept.</p> <p>How to create narratives It is beneficial to have the targeted audience involved in generating alternative or counter-arguments.</p> <p>Introduce new information and mental model People are less likely to accept the debunking of old/false beliefs when they are merely labelled as wrong; instead, they should be countered with new evidence. The new messages should also offer a new model for understanding the information. Elaboration and discourse increase the likelihood of replacing the old/false model with a new one.</p> <p>Link: http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0956797617714579</p>
4	Kaplan, J. T., Gimbel, S. I., & Harris, S. (2016). Neural correlates of maintaining one's political beliefs in the face of counterevidence. <i>Scientific reports, 6</i> , 39589.	<p>Beliefs and identity 'People are hard headed about their political beliefs, even when provided with contradictory evidence. Political beliefs are like religious beliefs in the respect that both are part of who you are and important for the social circle to which you belong. The study found that people who were most resistant to changing their beliefs had more activity in the amygdala (a pair of almond-shaped areas near the center of the brain) and the insular cortex, compared with people who were more willing to change their minds.</p>

		<p>The activity in these areas, which are important for emotion and decision making, may relate to how we feel when we encounter evidence against our beliefs. The amygdala in particular is known to be especially involved in perceiving threat and anxiety. That is consistent with the idea that <u>when we feel threatened, anxious or emotional, then we are less likely to change our minds.</u>'</p> <p>Link: https://www.nature.com/articles/srep39589</p>
5	<p>Feinberg, M., & Willer, R. (2015). From gulf to bridge: When do moral arguments facilitate political influence?. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i>, 41(12), 1665-1681.</p>	<p>Moral reframing Many conflicts are based chiefly on differing moral preferences, and not so much on detailed political or religious issues. If that is the case, <u>consider reframing your message so it can connect to the moral foundations of the targeted audience.</u> For example, highlight shared morals or values like justice, equality and tradition, and base your argument on those as a bridge that might connect opposing camps.</p> <p>Link: 'From Gulf to Bridge: When Do Moral Arguments Facilitate Political Influence?'</p>
6	<p>Atran, S., Gómez, Á., López-Rodríguez, L., Sheikh, H., Ginges, J., Wilson, L., Waziri, H., Vázquez, & A. Davis, R. (2017). The devoted actor's will to fight and the spiritual dimension of human conflict. <i>Nature Human Behaviour</i>, 1(9), 673.</p>	<p>Identity and values The study finds 'an apparent preference for value over kin by devoted actors (which) provides empirical support for the idea that humans may form their strongest (and potentially most expansive) political and religious ties by subordinating devotion to kin to a more abstract ideal.' <u>The more radicalised the audience is,</u> the more their individual identity, morals and sacred values are 'fused' (identical) with that of the extremist ideology or group, and <u>the less likely it is that confrontational approaches will work.</u></p> <p>Link: https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-017-0193-3</p>
7	<p>Green, Melanie C. & Fitzgerald, K. (2017). <i>Transportation Theory Applied to Health and Risk Messaging</i>. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication</p>	<p>Narrative persuasion and transport 'Transport refers to the feeling of being so absorbed in a story that connection to the real world is lost for some time; it includes cognitive engagement, emotional experience, and the presence of mental imagery. This experience is a key mechanism underlying narrative influence on recipients' attitudes and beliefs, particularly in combination with enjoyment and character identification.' Especially with <u>individuals who have a 'fused' identity,</u> an indirect approach, for example using surreal contexts like science fiction, adventure and mystery, might not feel like an attack on their identity, and could therefore render them more open-minded to new input.</p> <p>Link: 'Transportation Theory Applied to Health and Risk Messaging'</p>
8	<p>The Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP). (2015). <i>Theories of Change, Policy Brief.</i></p>	<p>Theory of change 'Too often well-meaning efforts result in unintended and counterproductive impacts. The gap between intent and impact is a challenge facing all organizations who make assumptions about how they can intervene. A theory of change is about how some driving or mitigating factor identified in a CONFLICT ASSESSMENT can be changed with some INTERVENTION PLAN to achieve an IMPACT that prevents violence or builds peace.'</p>

		<p>Link: http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/FINAL-Theories-of-Change-in-PB.pdf</p>
	<p>Beutel, A., Weine, S., Saeed, A., Mihajlovic, A., Stone, A., Beahrs, J., & Shanfield, S. (2016). Guiding Principles for Countering and Displacing Extremist Narratives. <i>Journal of Terrorism Research</i>, 7(3)</p>	<p>Delivering new narratives:</p> <p>'Know the intended audiences Choose a specific group or groups of persons you want to reach, and learn all you can about them.</p> <p>Define the desired outcomes Clarify what kind of changes and impact you want to make. This could include changing knowledge, attitudes and/or behaviours.</p> <p>Choose the medium(s) of communication Select the most appropriate medium for reaching your intended audience.</p> <p>Choose credible messengers Narratives should be transmitted by trusted and legitimate sources.</p> <p>Do no harm Narratives that have the potential to make a positive difference can also be harmful to your campaign. For example, humour and ridicule in anti-extremism messaging may be a double-edged sword.</p> <p>Evaluate the process and impact Given the lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness of counter-narratives, it is vitally important to apply programme evaluation methods that evaluate both what impact a message has, and how and why it is having that kind of impact. '</p> <p>Link: 'Guiding Principles for Countering and Displacing Extremist Narratives'</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>European Parliament Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs. (2017). Countering Terrorist Narratives. PE 596.829.</p>	<p>Target audience, disruption and quantity of alternative narratives and counter-narratives 'Disruption of violent extremist material needs to be applied comprehensively and across multiple platforms, in order to avoid displacing terrorist messaging activity between channels. The vacuum created by disruption needs to be filled with a series of messages designed to leverage a range of motivational drivers, in order to resonate with a target audience subject to varying motivations and in order to have a reinforcing cumulative effect on that audience. A <u>clear identification of the target audience</u> is vital to effective strategic communications, taking into account a spectrum of potential consumers of the message (intended, unintended, supporters, adversaries and neutrals). A <u>nuanced behavioural and attitudinal understanding of that audience</u> is needed to persuasively shape attitudes and behaviours.'</p> <p>Link: 'Countering Terrorist Narratives'</p>

<p>10</p>	<p>Rieger, D., Frischlich, L., & Bente, G. (2017). Propaganda in an insecure, unstructured world: How psychological uncertainty and authoritarian attitudes shape the evaluation of right-wing extremist internet propaganda. <i>Journal for Deradicalization</i>, (10), 203-229.</p>	<p>Uncertainty and authoritarian attitudes</p> <p>'The positive relation between authoritarianism and the attraction towards extremist ideologies such as transported within propaganda videos was fueled by psychological uncertainty. While under conditions of low uncertainty, authoritarianism even increased the rejection of extremist groups, potentially due to their challenge of the current social order; under conditions of higher uncertainty, the advantages of the clear worldview transmitted by extremist propaganda seemed to outweigh these disadvantages for individuals with authoritarian attitudes. In addition, uncertainty increased the identification with the national group addressed by the extremist propagator, irrespective of the authoritarian attitudes of the recipient.</p> <p><u>Attempts to challenge extremist ideologies online, for instance via so-called counter-narratives should therefore address uncertainties and the transmission of authoritarian attitudes.</u></p> <p>Particularly authoritarian sources transmitting peaceful values can foster peaceful instead of hostile inter-group attitudes under conditions of existential threats.'</p> <p>Link: http://journals.sfu.ca/jd/index.php/jd/article/view/88</p>
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Additional reading

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