

# The Transformative Power of Story-Telling

**An Edutainment Guide  
for Social Change**

A collaboration between Imaginario Foundation,  
Heartlines and The Communication Initiative,  
with the support of DW Akademie



**With Case  
Studies from  
Colombia and  
South Africa**

## The power of imagination and partnerships

Born in 1960 in Colombia, I belong to a generation permeated by armed conflict and political violence. We simply have learnt to “live with it”. Take La Violencia (The Violence) for example: this is the name given to the 1948-1952 period where a cruel bi-partisan war killed more than 300 thousand and displaced many thousands, and was triggered by the conservative elite’s fears of structural social and land reforms. My parents and grandparents lived thru these years and we all used the term naturally. But we did not talk about it enough and perhaps the fact that my father came from a very conservative family and my mother from a very liberal one had something to do with it. Not dealing with the structural issues underpinning our history probably explains why the majority of Colombians still are cautious about the Truth Commission’s final report (June 2022). Facts such as more than 9 million victims directly affected by the war, almost 40 thousand civilians kidnapped, 6 402 innocent civilians killed by the Army or the report’s recommendation on addressing structural racism and drugs’ legalization should be faced up front and debated.

Yet we are also a resilient, creative society, a megadiverse country where modernity and innovation coexist with deep inequality, and powerful social movements challenge corruption and human rights violations. There are thousands of stories of hope and social change with leaders doing extraordinary work at the local, regional and national level, many with their lives at risk. This is what our communication and media work has been about: our organizations Citurna and Imaginario have dedicated almost 40 years to telling these stories, amplifying voices and challenging stereotypes and stigmas. And since 1995/96 we decided to combine our political documentary work with schools’ TV and engaging youth and children, understanding that education is a very powerful space to trigger change.

This decision coincided with my first visit to South Africa in 1998, invited by the Rockefeller Foundation. I was part of a rather eclectic group of communication, media and development academics, CSOs, international development agencies, experts and practitioners brought together in a landmark meeting in Bellagio in 1997, thanks to Denise Gray Felder’s vision – then the Foundation’s communication director. The term Communication for Social Change (CSC) was coined then and was instrumental for our work in Colombia and for many organizations in Latin America. It was clear to me we needed to strive for longer term interventions, design systematically, capture processes with data, network and engage our region’s experiences in these global debates.

Being in South Africa was mind blowing not only because of the international discussions about communication for development and social change: I was really struck by the similarities between South Africa and Colombia seeking peace and reconciliation, their public TV system’s innovation in formats and dialogue to address Apartheid and SABC Education’s resources for schools.

And I was deeply moved by a field visit to Alexandria Clinic where Garth Japhet told us the story of how Soul City's primetime soap stories were inspired by this township and shared data on the health system, exercise of rights and legislation changes. This is why in 2000 we founded Imaginario with Citurna's co-director Patricia Castaño to expand our TV and media work. Our learning journey in CSC and Edutainment began with partners like Puntos de Encuentro from Nicaragua and Soul City and our partnership with The Communication Initiative and UNINORTE was consolidated.

Fast forward 22 years later to Colombia today: the peace agreement signed in 2016 with the FARC guerrillas has set in place a transitional justice system admired worldwide but there is a huge challenge ahead. We need a narrative to address and help overcome the trauma of war, to question social norms that have naturalized the use of violence, to embrace truth and trigger a national conversation which is fact-based, democratic and asks what happened? why? And how do we avoid repeating it?

It was clear that edutainment and SBCC was the way out but we could not start from scratch and reinvent the wheel. So I reached out to Garth Japhet again, as I had been following Heartlines' work on values and reconciliation with church leaders and faith-based organizations, Beyond the River and What's Your Story. He immediately accepted the invitation to support Colombia's Truth Commission and the transitional justice system. We learnt from each other and from other documented successes, such as BBC Media's EE interventions in Myanmar and Cambodia and their indicators to evaluate governance and democracy issues have informed UNINORTE's M&E process.

But this guide is not only about documenting Romper el Silencio, Beyond the River and our EE collaboration. We firmly believe there needs to be a closer look at SBCC and EE programming in countries like ours, by local organizations like ours, the challenges faced when working with government and public sector, with scarce international development funds and in complex policy and political environments. We also believe in systematic knowledge management, peer review and networking, guidelines and recommendations from lessons learnt, replicable in other southern contexts. The partnership with The Communication Initiative and UNINORTE is instrumental for this task.

Finally, thank you DW Akademie for trusting Imaginario and our partners and for joining this exciting learning journey which will support freedom of expression, social justice and democratic dialogue and debate.

Adelaida Trujillo  
Director Citurna and Imaginario  
The Communication Initiative Latin America  
Bogotá, December 2022

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# About this guide

This guide is for people and organisations interested in using evidence-based Edutainment to address social justice and reconciliation. The idea is to share with producers and non-profit organisations a step-by-step approach to creating an Edutainment strategy. The guide is enriched with case studies that document the experiences of two organisations, Fundación Imaginario and Heartlines, the complex challenges they faced and the lessons they learned implementing two Edutainment projects *Romper el Silencio* (Breaking the Silence) in Colombia and *Beyond the River* in South Africa.

The guide features different chapters that each cover a specific step in the development process.

- **What is Edutainment?** This chapter begins with a brief description of Entertainment Edutainment (EE) and why it is a valuable tool to promote individual and social change. It also gives a brief overview of different theories of change that you can use to guide your EE strategy.
- **Key decisions.** This chapter covers the key decisions that need to be made. It includes identifying the problem to be solved and the target audience. It also looks at alliances and partnerships required to implement and design your EE initiative.
- **Formative research.** This chapter explains how to conduct formative research, the characteristics of good research, and analysis of the environment and context.
- **From research to message.** This chapter focuses on the Message Brief document, which sets out the main issues to be addressed and the key messages you want to promote.
- **The story is the message.** This chapter covers the design of the strategy as a whole, its structure and how the different parts fit together. It focuses on different formats and how to create effective stories and characters.

- **Designing a multimedia strategy.** This chapter focuses on how to select the different components of your multimedia strategy and how they work together to meet your objectives. It explains the advantages of the multimedia approach to extend the reach and impact of your campaign into other media channels. It also examines story development, including plot and characters and how to use them effectively to shift attitudes and shape and drive behaviour change.
- **Pre-testing.** This chapter looks at the process of pre-testing all materials prior to distribution, to ensure their effectiveness and whether or not your intended messages are reaching the target audience.
- **Production.** This chapter covers the production stage.
- **Promotion.** This chapter outlines basic principles for the promotion of the production to the target audiences.
- **Monitoring & evaluation.** This chapter explores monitoring and evaluation, in order to assess and gauge the results and impact of your initiative

Following each chapter we document two case studies, one in Colombia called *Romper el Silencio (Breaking the Silence)* and one in South Africa entitled *Beyond the River*. These two innovative examples highlight the challenges and successes of Edutainment in two different societies, each undergoing change and transformation.

The guide is complemented by short videos, interviews, behind-the-scenes footage, photographs, conversations between team members, expert opinions and more.

We hope this guide will be a useful resource for producers and civil society on the benefits of using Edutainment to support change and to promote the transition towards more participatory democracies. We hope that you find the Colombian and South African experiences inspiring and that this motivates you to use Edutainment and the power of stories to transform lives.



## What is Edutainment (EE)?

**“** Stories bring us closer to people's past and present and allow us to learn about their points of view, their values and their aspirations. They have the power to move and inspire us, and to stimulate dialogue and debate. **”**

- Harriet Perlman, South African writer and producer

# What is Edutainment



*In this chapter we provide a brief description of Edutainment (EE) and why it is a valuable tool to promote individual and social change. It also gives a brief overview of different theories of change that you can use to guide your EE strategy.*

Stories have the power to change. Mass media entertainment programmes have been widely used throughout the world as a powerful means to educate, inform and influence social and individual change.

Popular Culture and Media are central to human rights and to shaping and shifting public opinion and behaviour. Stories open debate and conversation. They open a window into worlds and lives we many not know or understand and so promote tolerance and empathy for others.

Adelaida Trujillo, the Director of Imaginario in Colombia: “Edutainment questions social norms and challenges the status quo; therefore, it is one of the most exciting adventures that people and organisations involved in social change may ever pursue. Regardless of the organisation's size, scope or budget, Edutainment can be adapted and deliver good results if the methodology is followed. In the chapters to come, we shall see how to develop, step-by-step, an Edutainment strategy.”

**Edutainment (EE)** is the name given to any communication project that sets out to educate and entertain at the same time. EE uses popular entertainment formats to tackle serious social issues in a bold and entertaining way. Through carefully crafted stories, social issues are woven into popular dramas, which have the potential to reach millions. Edutainment projects can be small or large-scale.

They can include dramas, films, television series, reality shows, theatre, puppet shows, community storytelling events, radio, print and social media.



## What is Edutainment



There are numerous theories of change and as many debates on what actually triggers sustained change. In the debates about the different pathways to change, recent studies confirm the importance of dialogue and debate as a key step as well as the role of 'emotion'. Emotion is often a catalyst for action.

Rigorous Edutainment is based on sound social change theory which recognizes that the individual is part of a family, a broader community and a socio-political environment that all determine that person's ability to change. Culture and context are also important factors in influencing change.

Any successful EE initiative should include a number of key stages: formative research, message design, scripting/material design, pretesting, production, implementation and evaluation.

**Quality research** is the cornerstone of a successful EE initiative. It ensures that the storylines and characters are compelling and authentic, and rooted in the lived experiences of ordinary people. But the process also ensures that we design stories that have the potential to lead change.

**Testing** is another key step. Stories are tested with the target audience prior to production to ascertain whether they are popular, stimulate dialogue and debate, resonate with the target audience and address the identified barriers to change.

This guide will explain each of these stages in the EE process and discuss how to use them effectively to ensure your EE project is successful.

This manual focuses on two countries and two ground-breaking initiatives; Imaginario's *Romper el Silencio*, to support Colombia's Truth Commission. *Beyond the River* (What's Your Story?) supported South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the country's transition from a racially segregated society under apartheid to a democratically elected non-racial and just society.

“*Characters in these stories should be complex like us, never simply one dimensional. Some of them exhibit the behaviors we want to change. As the story unfolds, these characters transform, modeling the changes we want to achieve or challenging the social norms we want to change.*”

*Harriet Perlman – EE producer and writer*

Edutainment aims to inform, educate, invite reflection and dialogue, and shift individual and social behaviors. To achieve these changes, Edutainment uses storytelling and different entertainment formats which can include television and radio drama, music videos, comics, games and theater to connect with its audiences.

At its heart, Edutainment needs to remain entertaining and must compete with what is popular entertainment at the time.

Edutainment works because it appeals to emotions. It touches the audience. Also, because it is also capable of initiating reflection and dialogue on topics rarely talked about.

But not all Edutainment is equally effective. Edutainment that is research-based, has mass reach and popular appeal, and makes use of a number of communication channels over time, has better results.

Edutainment that uses a multimedia approach gives multiple opportunities to reinforce messages across different channels and improves uptake of messaging.

Whether you choose a single medium or a multimedia approach, your Edutainment may have a higher chance of success if you create an ongoing Edutainment programme, such as a radio or television series. Ongoing Edutainment series can deal with a variety of issues over a long period of time, providing scope to deal with complex issues in more detail. It also establishes loyal audiences at the outset of each new season, without having to build an audience from scratch each time.

Edutainment projects can be small or large-scale. Some Edutainment projects are specific interventions designed for a local audience: a community drama in a local area, a village storytelling event or a puppet show.

Others are more wide-reaching, targeting mass audiences nationally. Edutainment is often combined with advocacy and on-the-ground programmes that build on the popularity of the Edutainment, which act as a catalyst for community and interpersonal dialogue, debate and action.





## Edutainment at a glance

- Edutainment is rooted in research and a deep understanding of the intended audience.
- It has mass appeal.
- It uses evidence to create messages, stories and characters.
- It presents social issues using popular entertainment formats to reach a wide audience.

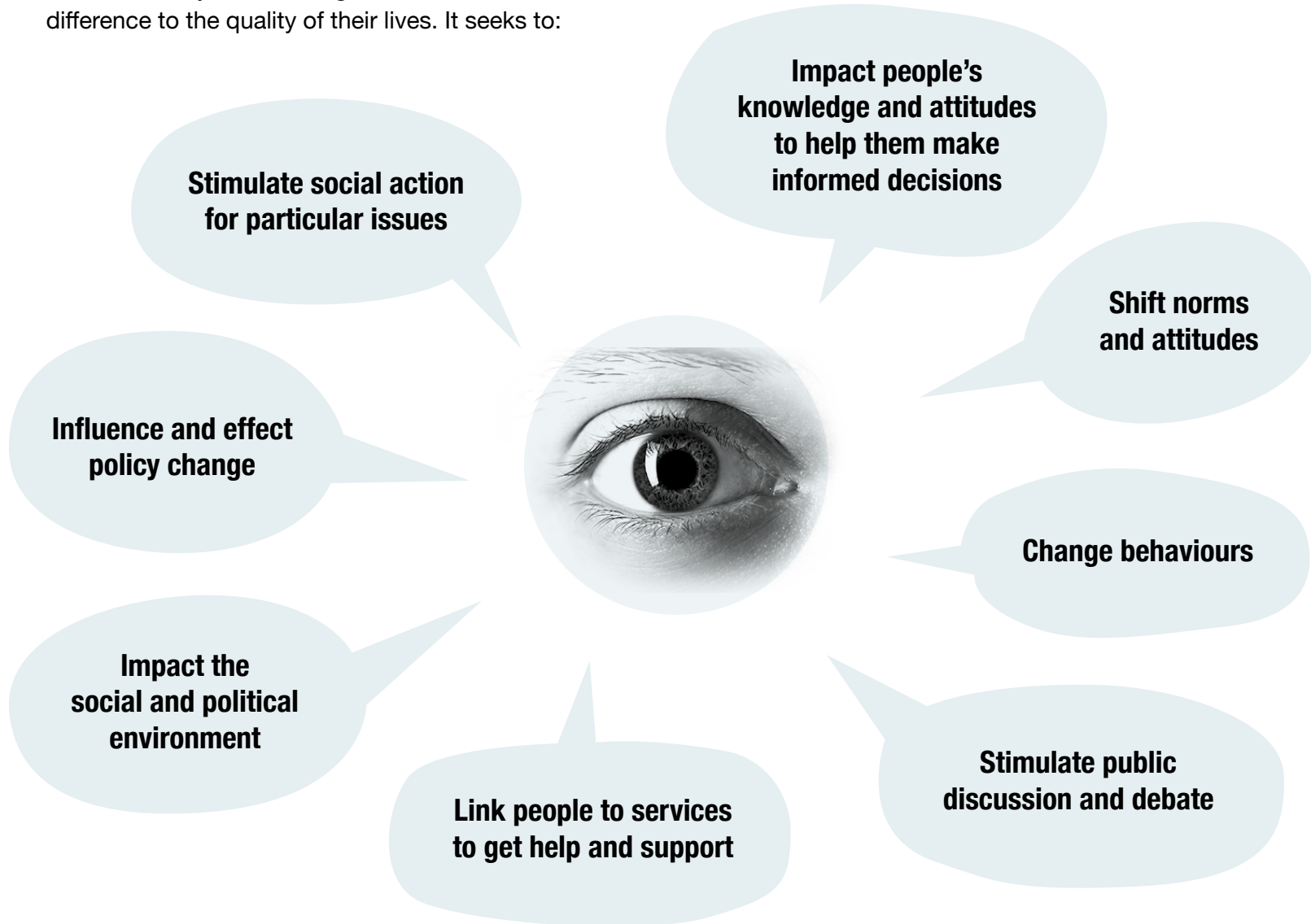
## Characteristics of Edutainment

- EE inspires, engages and shapes positive individual and social change.
- It is developed through stories with a clear narrative structure.
- It is usually combined with a clear advocacy and social mobilisation strategy.



# What can Edutainment achieve?

Popular Edutainment gets people talking and thinking. It aims not only to reach large audiences, but to make a difference to the quality of their lives. It seeks to:

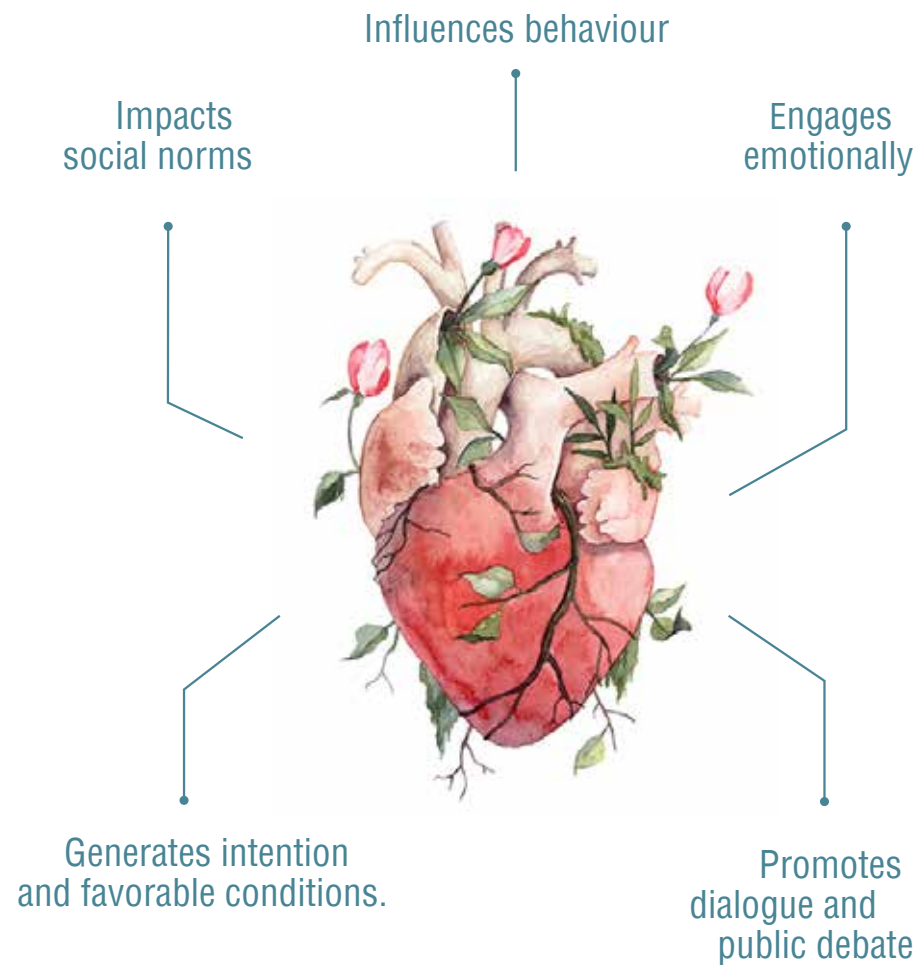


## Mass appeal

In most countries, conventional education programmes and materials are often unable to attract large audiences. But popular entertainment such as prime-time television and radio dramas, soap operas and game shows usually reach much larger audiences.

**“** By creating a programme that is both entertaining and educational, and communicating it to people through the most popular media, you will be able to reach the maximum potential number of people. To do this, your Edutainment show must be as popular and entertaining as the most popular programmes already on air. It must compete with the best.”

Dr Garth Japhet - CEO Heartlines



## Social and behaviour change communication

The development of Edutainment is closely linked to the related field of Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC).

The field of SBCC developed in the 1950s to support post-war international aid programmes to support education and change. Since then, SBCC has evolved from delivering simple messages to promoting dialogue and debate and catalysing broader social change. It is based on sound social change theory, which recognises that the individual is part of a family, a broader community and a socio-political environment that all determine that person's ability to change their behaviour.

Today we recognise that culture and context are also important factors in influencing behaviour. Now development projects use Edutainment strategies that influence and effect social change using a range of media.

## Theories of social and behaviour change

There are many social and behaviour change theories and models that can be used to guide your Edutainment programme, from planning to implementation and evaluation.

However, experience has shown that a single theory or model may not be enough to explain and guide social and behaviour change. Using a combination of theories and models is often best.

Below is a summary of some of the common theories of social and behaviour change that have been used to guide Edutainment programmes.

**Bandura's Social Learning Theory** states that people learn through observation, imitation and modelling. Self-efficacy influences behaviour, in that people are more likely to engage in certain behaviours when they believe they are capable of successfully modelling the desired behaviour. In this regard therefore, an Edutainment programme may deliberately present specific character(s) so that the targeted audience will model this behaviour.

**Lewin's Theory of Change** adds the role of emotion and dialogue and debate to an understanding of how behaviour change takes place. Behaviour that is often resistant to change is lifted up for scrutiny through an "emotional stir-up". This leads to dialogue and debate. Edutainment that engages the audience emotionally and sparks dialogue and debate has a high chance of effecting behaviour and social change.

**Paulo Freire's Theory of 'Critical Consciousness'** states that when people become aware (through education) of oppressive social, economic and political forces in their society, they are more able to create change. Participating in dialogue can facilitate structural change. EE campaigns that strengthen dialogue have the potential to enable social and political transformation.

**Social Movement Theories** refer to the ways in which communities and groups organise and engage in collective action or resist mobilisation efforts. In that sense, EE should aim to mobilise people, organisations and networks to change the structural barriers that prevent transformation from taking place.

**Social Identity Theory** presents an explanatory account of the importance of social norms in determining behaviour. Social identification with a group is a key part of one's identity. "Social identity" refers to the individual's knowledge that they belong to certain social groups and this group membership has emotional significance and value. Positive social identity keeps groups together, and at the same time, regulates individual behaviour it is the cultural glue that binds people. Edutainment that aims at social and behaviour change should therefore aim at shifting social norms too.

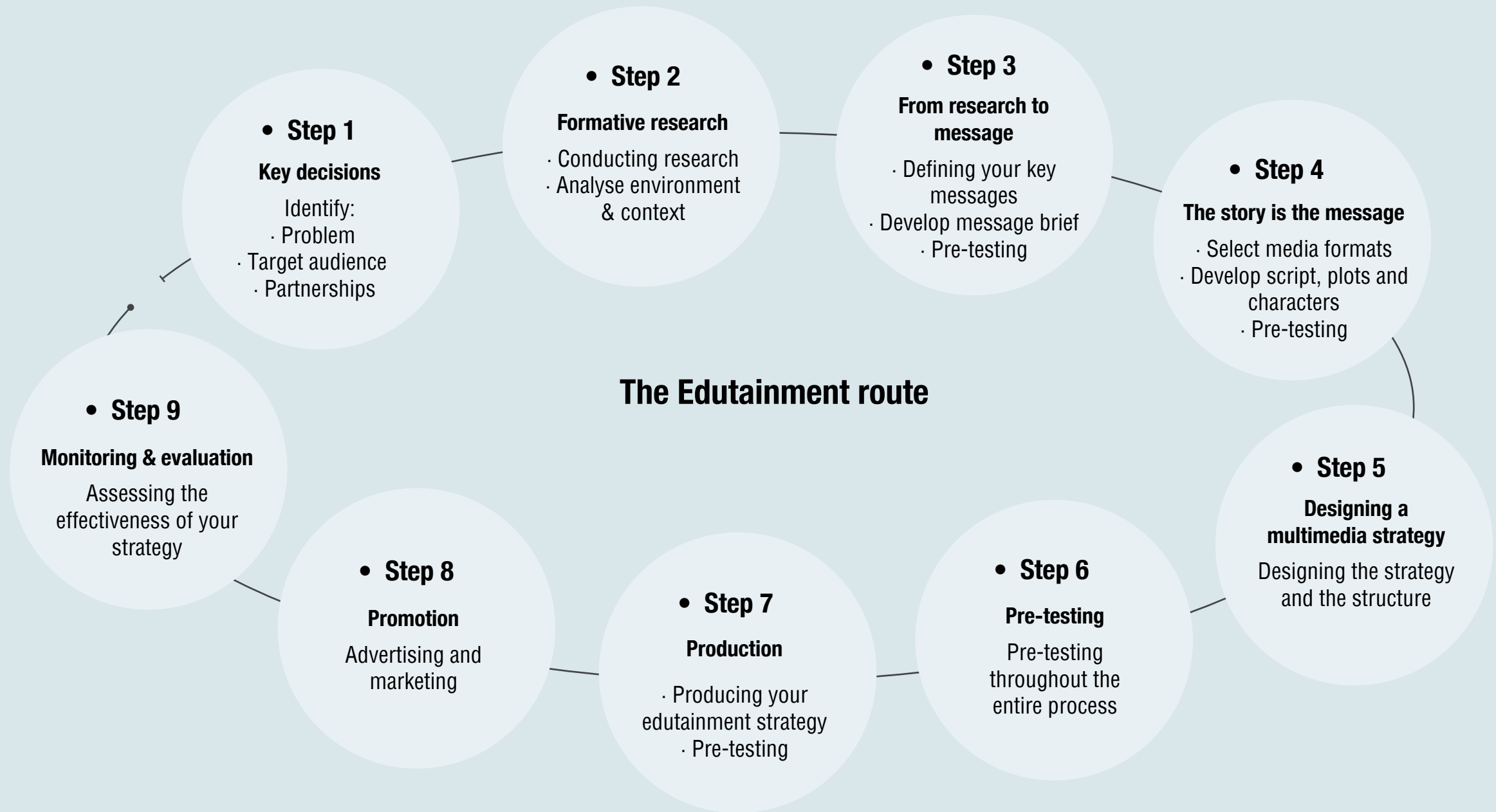
## Theories of social and behaviour change

**The Information–Motivation–Behaviour Skills Model** is a learning-based model that acknowledges the role of social norms and peer modelling. It also highlights knowledge, attitudes and personal skills in bringing about behaviour change.

**The Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour** is an expansion of the Theory of Reasoned Action but includes the idea of habitual behaviour in the model. It states that the three most important factors determining the probability of behaviour change are habit, intention and enabling conditions. The theory further explains the role of beliefs, anticipated outcomes, norms, roles, self-concept and emotions and attitudes in determining behaviour.

*Effective Edutainment programmes often make use of a combination of these theories to help drive behaviour change by building self-efficacy, stimulating debate, challenging social norms and cultural practices that act as barriers to change, shifting attitudes and personal skills and developing positive habits.*

*Think about which theory you will use in your Edutainment programme.*



**Participation, capacity building and knowledge management throughout the process**

# Key Decisions

Step 1

“Imagine a South Africa where, instead of creating negative stereotypes of each other, we start sharing our stories and getting to know each other better...”

- Audience comment, *Beyond the River*, South Africa

## The EE Route

- 1 - Key decisions
- 2 - Formative research
- 3 - From research to message
- 4 - The story is the message
- 5 - Designing a multimedia strategy
- 6 - Pre-testing
- 7 - Production
- 8 - Promotion
- 9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

**Chapter overview:** in this chapter we cover the key decisions that need to be made. It includes identifying the problem to be solved and the target audience. It also looks at the alliances and partnerships required to implement and design your EE initiative.



## Context

Edutainment has demonstrated its effectiveness in driving social change and addressing complex social issues in a bold, entertaining manner. Authentic storytelling can promote dialogue and discussion, inspire change and mobilise communities into action.

***“For EE to be successful it is essential to define the concrete issue you wish to address and establish first and whether or not Edutainment can contribute towards driving change and achieving this goal”.***

*Juana Marulanda – Communications Specialist Imaginario*

## Strategic objectives

A crucial first step in any Edutainment strategy is to define the general objective. What do you want to achieve? The objective must be specific, measurable, and achievable. Since an Edutainment strategy aims to change individual and collective behaviors, it is helpful to express your objective in terms of what will be changed. For example:

- **Promote conversations, encourage reflection and improve the historical understanding of the armed conflict in Colombia.**
- **Promote reconciliation by creating a culture of respect, tolerance and trust to strengthen social cohesion in South Africa.**



## Audiences

The next step is to define the intended audience, the people we want to reach.

When defining the intended audience of an Edutainment strategy, it is essential to remember that there are primary and secondary audiences. The primary audience is the people directly affected by a problem and secondary audiences are people who influence the decision-making in the primary audience.

## Partnerships

No one can do it all. Building good working relationships is fundamental to the success of your project. Strong partnerships need to be mutually beneficial. Everyone involved must have something to gain, so that everyone is committed to the success of your programme. Working in partnerships, rather than alone, is a very effective way to maximise your impact.

### The benefits of partnerships are numerous:

- Partnerships can build a critical mass
- Messages across different organisations can be harmonised
- Everyone works from the same research base
- You develop a common approach
- You create economies of scale
- You maximise impact and reach
- Leverage a brand for greater impact
- Increase volume and consistency of a campaign that can be sustained over time
- Create a supportive environment for change



**Partnership building**

**Adelaida Trujillo.**

Executive Director

Breaking the Silence

Imaginario Foundation

## Identify partners to build a supportive environment

Partnership building and management is an ongoing process that begins with the design of the strategy and continues throughout the project until its completion. There are likely to be many people and organisations already working on the problem you have identified who may be interested in joining forces at different stages. Research shows standalone Edutainment programmes can be effective. But your Edutainment programme will carry more weight if it supports what is already happening on the ground.

Edutainment can be used to catalyse community initiatives by bringing together organisations working in the field. They could be in a range of sectors: government, civil society, academia and communities. These alliances can broaden the scope of the strategy, help to bring it to life, contribute resources in cash or in kind, and jointly push for change. Identify individuals and groups who are actively involved in the issues being addressed by your Edutainment programme. Consult with key individuals and groups when you develop the Edutainment programme so that people come on board with enthusiasm and commitment.

Each partner should ideally add something to the strategy: knowledge of the problem, diverse perspectives, skills or experience not available within the organisation, networks, relations with the media, direct contact with target audiences, technical or human resources, to mention just a few possibilities. For example, a strategy aimed at reducing pregnancy rates among adolescents and young people could seek alliances with public entities in charge of health policy, or with health services and educational institutions in the region, or with youth networks, among others.

It is vital that allies are invited, heard and taken into account so that they take ownership of the project. It is also essential to create spaces and circulate information on the progress of the project.

While partnerships can be quite fruitful, keep in mind that they also require an open mind and the ability to look at problems from other perspectives. They also require time and effort. But if they are robust and if partners from all sectors feel engaged, they are much more likely to help the Edutainment initiative grow and sustain itself. It is highly unlikely that a strategy of this nature could survive without partnerships. Try to keep an open mind when listening to diverse opinions and ideas.



*Put a lot of energy into forming partnerships. Set goals for the partnership and ensure that all partners maintain the quality and the integrity of the Edutainment message.*

## Developing partnerships

There are three kinds of partnerships that you should build and nurture.

- 1. Service providers.** These are the services that you need to produce your Edutainment. They include creative people, researchers, writers, film makers, marketing agencies, evaluators, puppet makers, illustrators, designers or publishers. They have expertise in the development of a media format or service that you require. Together with you, they will ensure that the Edutainment is of a high quality.
- 2. Campaign partners.** These are likeminded organisations involved in tackling a similar issue. These could be government (national, provincial or local), topic interest groups, your target audience, NGOs or CBOs and media owners and directors.
- 3. Funding partners.** Obtaining funds is all about building and maintaining relationships with funders.

Funders are critically important allies and should be understood not as mere resource providers, but as an integral part of the strategy. Building a good relationship with them, knowing how to make full use their capabilities, experience and expertise and helping them to understand the needs of the project, greatly facilitates the flow of resources. There is a wide variety of funding possibilities: from your organisation's own resources to government funds, international cooperation, foundations or the private sector. You will most likely have to tap into several funding sources and adjust to the priorities of different funders. This will require you to be flexible and imaginative, but be careful not to lose the essence of the project or promise what you cannot achieve.

## Guidelines for creating and maintaining successful partnerships

1. Bring on board the most skilled people available. It's a good basis for effective partnerships.
2. Make sure all partners' needs are being met and everyone has as much to gain from the partnership as the management team.
3. The fact that your partners come from diverse backgrounds is both a strength and a weakness. It's a strength because it is precisely this diversity which results in a powerful product. It's a weakness because individuals' ideas may be in conflict.
4. Bring all the major partners into the process early, to ensure that all partners share a common vision.
5. Do not be afraid of withdrawing from relationships that are not working out.
6. Creating Edutainment is an interactive process. The final product can be severely compromised by soured relationships between its co-creators.

## The team

Gathering a team is critical. Edutainment requires experts from different areas or with knowledge which might be inside or outside the organisation. The number of people to hire depends on the organisation's structure, size of the strategy, and available resources.

### The following experience and knowledge may help build a strong team.

- Experience in Communication for Social and Behaviour Change with participatory approaches, strategic planning and production for different media
- Deep knowledge of the issue to be addressed
- Experience in research, monitoring, and evaluation applied to Edutainment or communication for Social and Behaviour Change
- Experience in PR and fundraising
- Experience in operations planning and coordination of teams
- Experience in administration of funds
- Experience in knowledge management processes

Overall the project is held by the **project team** who contracts a team of service providers including the creative team to produce the Edutainment product and partners with other organisations to implement the campaign.

**A creative team** will be essential depending on the media chosen: director, screenwriter, editor, graphic designer, web manager.

Edutainment processes are different from creative processes for commercial media. It is essential that the team is interested and, hopefully, experienced in social or public interest topics. However, commercial insight is also valuable as the strategy will be competing against popular entertainment.

If the organisation is not a media producer, think of hiring a specialised company to provide the technical team and equipment needed during production.

Monitoring and evaluation are vital to Edutainment, and they need specialised knowledge and expertise. The assessment criteria and indicators are different from those in commercial strategies. For example, media reception is measured against engagement indicators as opposed to ratings.



# Colombian Case Study

## Context

The history of armed conflict within Colombia dates back to the early 1960s, when the first revolutionary guerilla groups assembled in defiance against the state. Throughout the following decades, the rise of new insurgency and counterinsurgency militias escalated the violence.

***"Throughout the recent decades, persistent and increasing acts of violence, sieges, torture, kidnappings and massacres have flooded the countryside and the collective conscience with blood. All this constitutes a fragmented history, which a good part of society has experienced from the outside, or where "the other" was perceived as an enemy to eliminate, not as an adversary to dialogue or negotiate with."*** (Final Report of Colombia's Truth Commission).

These past 60 years of conflict have left an incomprehensible trail of civilian victims and a humanitarian tragedy that is difficult to fully grasp. The Unique Victim Registry (RUV), which keeps the official government tally, indicated in June of 2022, that 9 278 531 people had been victims in the context of the war.

The RUV also recognised 1 077 477 homicide victims. If we compare it with the Central American civil wars, the estimated death count in Guatemala is 200 000, while El Salvador's is 75 000. The current numbers in the active civil





**Marcos and Olga**  
**Story of a kidnapping**

Documentary series  
Breaking the Silence

wars in the Middle East are 500 000 deaths in Syria, and 377 000 in Yemen. The scope of the civilian deaths of the Colombian armed conflict is similar to the sum of all these four civil wars.

Regarding disappeared people, the RUV also recorded 188 997 victims. The war in Colombia has claimed more forced disappearances than the sum of all other Latin American conflicts put together.

On the issue of internal forced displacement, the UNHCR's (UN's Human Rights High Commissioner) report of 2016 ranked Colombia at the top of the list with 6.9 million victims. In June 2022, the RUV indicated there are 8 258 460 victims of forced displacement.

Colombia's contemporary armed conflict follows a pattern of insurgency-counterinsurgency. Its origins lie in a society afflicted by profound socio-economic inequality, and a bipartisan political regime (Liberal and Conservative parties) which excluded other alternatives. The most afflicted, marginalised rural and urban social sectors reacted by organising rebel movements, against the state, inspired by Marxist ideologies and the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions.

The Colombian State, however, was aligned with the **anti-communism**, the US security policy for the hemisphere. The government's **national security doctrine** empowered the army, police forces and the intelligence agencies which became instrumental to this counterinsurgency policy. The effect was that the Armed forces not only focused on combatting these rebel groups, but in parallel repressed dissident political sectors and movements.

With the counterinsurgency framework in place, the army promoted the involvement of civilians in the war. It initially organised the so called "self-defense groups" in the rural areas, which were followed by the creation of paramilitary groups. These structures were designed to be used as a combat force against the guerillas. Land owners and drug barons soon got involved with the paramilitaries, to pursue their own agendas. These strategic territorial partnerships plus their huge influx of cash and resources, triggered the disproportionate growth of these parastatal military structures. The paramilitaries became an illegal, direct combat force against the guerillas. They violated the constitutional mandate of the Armed Forces. They consolidated a nationwide repressive political and social force.





**Enilda:**  
**Story of a return**  
Documentary series  
Breaking the Silence

“ Colombia has been characterised by enormous inequality. This translates into the stigmatization of difference, be it gender, cultural, educational or economic. This is accompanied by ignorance of the needs and concerns of historically marginalized and discriminated groups, for example women and Indigenous communities, and violent conflict resolution.”

- María Emma Wills. *Message Guardian*.  
*Breaking the Silence, Colombia*.

**"The definition of the armed conflict as a tapestry of stakeholders, alliances and interests, allows us to see that the responsibilities for the tragedy it represents is well beyond those who took up arms. It's an ethical and political responsibility -and in some cases, a direct responsibility- of political parties (of all ideologies), and of economic, criminal, social and cultural sectors. A war that left more than nine million victims has direct and indirect perpetrators who must be accountable for their decisions... but it is also the responsibility of all Colombians who today are summoned to build a different way of life, sharing not only the same land/territory, but also a common history". (Truth Commission's Final Report. June 2022)**

These 60 years of civil war have only been possible because of three factors. Firstly persistent socioeconomic inequality, particularly inequality in the concentration of income and of rural land ownership.

Secondly, because progressive democratic reforms, for example political participation of leftist movements or independent parties, frequently elicited extreme violent reactions when they didn't represent the interests of the ruling classes or the armed actors in the regions.

Thirdly, the formation of war-based economies linked to illicit activities such as drug trafficking, illegal mining, fuel theft, extortion etc., generated incentives for the consolidation of illegal armed groups.

**Lastly, there exists a propensity towards violent conflict resolution in Colombian society, which has yet to be overcome.**

There have been several negotiations between the Colombian State and the illegal armed forces since the 80s. The last was concluded in 2016, with the signature of what is known as the Peace Agreement for the Disarmament, Demilitarisation and Reintegration of the FARC-EP, the largest and oldest guerilla group in Colombia. The Peace Agreement was to be approved by the Colombian people through a referendum, in order for it to be enforced, and to end 60 years of conflict. However, 50.21% of the voters said 'no'. The main reasons that people voted 'no' included:

- The political participation guarantees offered to the ex FARC-EP leadership (automatic seats in Congress for example)



**Oscar Montealegre**  
**The illusion of war**  
 Documentary series  
Breaking the Silence

- A dissatisfaction with the proposed transitional justice system because it prioritises uncovering the truth. It grants reparation to victims over punishing the perpetrators with exemplary sentences.
- Some sectors of society are afraid to unveil and recognise the power structures that have perpetuated the conflict.

A new Peace Agreement was negotiated with the opposition and signed and subsequently approved by Congress without passing through a citizen's vote, further polarising Colombia's public opinion.

The Peace Agreement created the Comprehensive System for Peace which began its activities in 2018 and is composed of judicial and extrajudicial mechanisms: the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), the Unit for the Search for Disappeared Persons (UBPDD) and the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repitition (CEV). The latter listened to more than thirty thousand testimonies of victims, perpetrators and witnesses of the armed conflict that represented all sectors, regions and social conditions. This rigorous comparative research and analysis process lasted almost four years.

In June 2022, the Truth Commission delivered 13 chapters of the Final Report entitled "**There is a future if there is truth**" and a comprehensive web platform to promote social participation. This created the widest possible circulation of all the contents produced during its three year mandate. All this content contributes to an extensive and comprehensive account of the patterns and causes of the internal armed conflict in Colombia which can be accessed here:

<https://www.comisiondelaverdad.co/>

**The first leftist president democratically elected in Colombia, Gustavo Petro, (2022-2026) when presented the Truth Commission's Final Report, embraced its recommendations and confirmed his government's commitment to the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement. It was slow and contested by the previous government.**

*The Final Report of the Truth Commission "...contains an essential part of that truth which is necessary to move from a traumatic past to a peaceful future, where differences are resolved democratically, and to overcome the factors of inequity, corruption and inhumanity that have condemned us time and again to a repetition of the conflict".*



**Context for Dialogue**  
**María Emma Wills**  
 Message Guardian  
Breaking the Silence



**The other as enemy  
Jennifer Vargas**

Documentary series  
Breaking the Silence

The ultimate goal of the strategy is to:

- Strengthen **democracy** and the **understanding of the power structures** behind the war.
- Contribute to identifying the social norms and practices embedded in Colombia's society which have normalized decades of armed conflict
- Promote **critical historic thinking and empathetic perspectives**
- Strengthen democratic processes, based on equality, respect for diversity, anti-discriminatory rights and coexistence based on respect for diversity

### Problem

However, a war which spans six decades has complex side effects, according to Vladimir Melo, historian and Message Guardian of the Colombian Entertainment Education (EE) strategy Romper el Silencio:

*“An anesthetic effect on social sectors that haven’t been directly impacted by violence, who became numb to the pain of others; an effect that normalizes violence so its exercise is accepted as “natural”; a polarising effect: the public debate between punitive justice vs transitional justice as a way of addressing and resolving the armed conflict has triggered opposite perspectives, which are stigmatised by both sides. This is permeating all spheres of the social, political, and electoral agenda.*

*All of these effects have produced a kind of “social silence” regarding what happened during the armed conflict across large sections of Colombian society. To construct peace it is necessary to have a permanent dialogue about what happened. It is necessary to break the silence and reflect about the truth of the war.”*

### Objective

In this context, Imaginario and its partners designed Romper el Silencio (*Breaking the Silence*), a multimedia communication strategy that encourages conversations, stimulates reflection, strengthens knowledge about the armed conflict and contributes to historical thinking with a critical approach.

Through emotionally compelling stories, it aims to teach:

- Active listening with an open heart and empathy, despite differences
- Respect for diversity of opinion



**Truth frees us**  
**Carlos Mario Jiménez**  
Documentary series  
Breaking the Silence

- Promote informed dialogue and debate by highlighting contrasting sources and data. The ultimate goal is to be able to understand and implement non-violent approaches to dealing with social and interpersonal differences. To build coexistence among all Colombians and contribute to sustainable alternatives to armed conflict in Colombia.

### Target Audiences

The primary audience of Breaking the Silence is young people between the ages of 12 and 17. It is also targeted at parents and teachers who - according to the Socioecological Model (we change according to our context / environment) - influence the behaviour of teenagers.

The decision to reach out to youth and teenagers was not only because this is the generation that will be able to build lasting peace, but also in consensus with the Truth Commission, which did not have at the time a specific pedagogical strategy for this age group.





## Reach

The scope of the strategy is national. The whole country has a responsibility to find solutions to end the armed conflict.

It is worth noting that there are regions in Colombia that are much more affected by the conflict, in particular rural areas. In other areas the conflict was not directly experienced, in particular large and medium-sized cities. As a result there are very marked differences in the way the conflict is seen and interpreted. For rural and remote areas, the conflict is a very real experience and the causes and implications of the violence are understood in depth. For urban areas, the conflict is somewhat distant and alien. A war that they read about in the media and its roots, development and consequences are often unknown. This has resulted in often an indifferent attitude towards this humanitarian tragedy.

## Partners and donors

One of the central activities in this project has been building partnerships with organisations committed to democratic values, strengthening peace and coexistence in Colombia; a commitment to overcoming the trauma caused by six decades of armed conflict.

- **Driving force:** The strategy was originally conceived as a partnership between Imaginario, Citurna and the Truth Commission. We received the support of the EU through RedProdepaz, which provided the basic resources for the formative research and development of the messages.

- **Strategy's development:** Other partners joined at a later stage. DW Akademie (DWA) made it possible to train scriptwriters, producers, directors and communication collectives in the edutainment methodology. Resources were invested in developing the first version of the TV series scripts, writing this guide, and designing an imple-



“ It’s not just a product with a fantastic creative team that knows how to tell stories, no. It’s counting with great allies who share their knowledge and experience, the good, the bad, the regular... Another one is alliances that are on the level, with preexisting networks...”

- Adelaida Trujillo, Director Fundación Imaginario



mentation, financial and distribution plan. The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and FESCOL (Colombia programme) have played a vital role, supporting the production of all non-fiction content, documentary series and shorts, podcasts, radio spots, a website and the schools outreach package.

Heartlines (South Africa) and BBC Media Action (UK) contributed their time and many years of experience to train the technical and creative team and mentor the scriptwriting process, and support the monitoring & evaluation design.

German cooperation continues (to date) thanks to FESCOL and GIZ thru the project ProPaz2: with funds to guarantee the design and pilot of how to roll out Romper el Silencio in the school system and youth networks. Fundraising for the fiction series continue.

- **Building Networks:** Imaginario’s participation in the Truth Commission’s pedagogical processes, such as the Laboratorios de Cocreación (Pedagogical Tools Co-creation Laboratories), made it possible to learn first-hand about the opinions, experiences and motivations of teachers from all over the country working in a post-conflict Colombia. Some of these teachers participated in the formative research focus groups, pre-testing and pilot implementation.

- **Research and knowledge management:** from the inception of the programme Imaginario & Citurna invited longtime core partners Universidad del Norte (Barranquilla) and The Communication Initiative Networks onboard. They have contributed with their extensive expertise in research, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as knowledge management and web-based communities of practice, respectively.

- **Experts:** an added value has been the generous participation of an interdisciplinary group of experts. Well known and reputed historians, psychologists, philosophers, pedagogues, educators, teachers, anthropologists, writers, playwrights, artists, film, television and digital media producers and, of course communication and Edutainment colleagues, have contributed with a rich diversity of knowledge to advise the process at different times. This range of partners and funders have created confidence in the strategy, its independence and results.



## Team

One of the distinctive features of the Colombian strategy has been the careful selection of the team members. More than 90 people with an excellent track record and experience have carried out the different tasks, which include:

- **Administration**
- **Coordination**
- **Research (formative and pre-testing)**
- **Designing Messages & Message Brief**
- **The Creative Team (stories, scripts)**
- **Education (developing resources to promote dialogue in schools)**
- **Knowledge management**
- **Partnerships and alliance building**



## Capacity building

Capacity building in Colombia to implement Communication for Social Change and Edutainment strategies has been a distinctive feature of this initiative.

For this reason, special attention has been given to identifying global leaders in Edutainment and local talent. They have shared their experience and lessons in more than 15 workshops. Some



topics covered in the training included: story development, script writing, theories of change, radio soaps and talk shows, podcasts, schools outreach materials, web platforms, financial strategies, marketing and promotion.

The skills and strategies shared, form the basis of this Guide thanks to the support of DW Akademie, and will be widely distributed in the field through The Communication Initiative's platforms.

Some of the workshops included:

- **How to do Edutainment** Garth Japhet CEO Heartlines.
- **Designing Edutainment Strategies.** Jennifer Charlton. Executive Producer Heartlines.
- **Using drama to drive social and behavior change.** Harriet Perlman. Producer and writer. Heartlines.
- **Creating Schools' based resources.** Emma Delius. Project manager and content developer. Strategy #WhatsYourStory. Heartlines.
- **Tea Cup Diaries and their evaluation methodology.** (from Myanmar). Anna Colquhoun, Research Director and Dipak Bhattarai, Producer. BBC Media Action.
- **Back to the Jungle.** Indonesia. Sonia Whitehead. BBC Media Action.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation of E-Entertainment Strategies.** Candice Harrison, Singizi. South Africa.
- **Inputs for Funding E-Entertainment Strategies.** Donor scoping and Roundtable. Warren Feek - The Communication Initiative and Ester Veldhuis (The Netherlands).
- **Lessons Learned from the Education Sector** (focus in Colombia) Escuelas de Paz (*Schools of Peace*); Aquí estamos para Ti (*We're here for You*); nocomasmasmientiras.org and #LeyComidaChatarra. RedPapaz; Edumotion, Coschool; Que la Verdad Sea Dicha (Let the truth be told).
- **Web platforms and knowledge management.** Warren Feek. The Communication Initiative. Canada.



# South African Case Study

## Context

### A history of separate development

Between 1948 and 1994, South Africa was a country divided by the apartheid system. Apartheid was a system of institutionalised racial segregation that was established by the National Party and was enforced through authoritarian rule. Apartheid ensured that the minority white population controlled the political, social and economic life of all South Africans. People of colour could not vote, had to live in designated areas and could not attend the same schools as white children. They could only hold certain jobs.

Apartheid was widely criticised, both internally and internationally. During the 1970s and 1980s internal resistance intensified and became increasingly militant. This was met with violent crackdowns by the government and police that resulted in thousands of deaths and illegal detentions. At this time South Africa was on the brink of a bloody civil war. This was only averted when the National Party began bilateral negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC), the leading anti-apartheid movement, to end segregation and introduce majority rule. This resulted in the first democratic elections on 27 April 1994.

### The need for reconciliation

**South Africa emerged from apartheid rule in 1994, with the election of Nelson Mandela as the first democratically elected president. But building reconciliation was not an easy task. There were massive divisions between black and white people. The conflict during apartheid resulted in horrific acts of violence and human rights abuses as well as massive economic and political inequality.**





**The TRC, a world model**  
**Mbongiseni Buthelezi**

Senior Researcher and Analyst  
Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission

*This video was produced by the Apartheid Museum as part of its permanent installation on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).*

The Government of National Unity began the hard work of reconciliation in a deeply divided country. In 1995 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established with Archbishop Desmond Tutu as the chair. The TRC's primary purpose was to promote reconciliation and forgiveness between the perpetrators and the victims of apartheid. It was seen as an important avenue for South Africans to come to terms with their past and forge a future that was based on reconciliation. The TRC was premised on the notion that remembering is critical to healing. The TRC provided a safe space for people to tell their stories and it was underpinned by a reconciliation strategy that created space for reparation, restitution, memorialisation and prosecution to drive the transformation agenda in South Africa.

***“The TRC is really held up around the world, as a model of how to avoid the kind of blood bath that seemed imminent in South Africa.”*** Mbongiseni Buthelezi, Senior Researcher and TRC Analyst.

Yasmin Sooka, TRC Commissioner says, ***“I think the Commission was successful in the sense that firstly it served the political purpose for which it was intended. That is something we should never forget; that the Commission came about because of a compromise around the question of prosecutions. It was the deal that was necessary for the government to begin to take over the management of the security forces and it accomplished that deal.”***

***“We are charged to unearth the truth about our dark past, to lay the ghosts of that past to rest so that they will not return to haunt us; and thereby contribute to the healing of a traumatised and wounded people, for all of us in South Africa are wounded people.”*** Desmond Tutu - Opening the first TRC hearings, 15 April 1986





### The TRC had three specific tasks:

1. Discover the causes and the nature of human rights violations in South Africa between 1960 and 1994.
2. Identify victims with a view to paying reparations.
3. To give amnesty to those who fully disclosed their involvement in politically motivated human rights violations. This included people from the apartheid state and liberation movements.

### The work of the TRC was implemented through three committees:

1. The Human Rights Violations Committee investigated human rights abuses.
2. The Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee was responsible for restoring victims' dignity by formulating proposals to assist with rehabilitation.
3. The Amnesty Committee considered applications from perpetrators who applied for amnesty.



***"In terms of reconciliation, I think it was a little unrealistic to expect the Commission to deliver national reconciliation. But I do think the commission played a small part in providing opportunities for people to come together and reconcile. Also for providing a framework through which reconciliation could be pursued,"*** says Howard Varney, TRC Consultant.

Mbongiseni Buthelezi, Senior Researcher and TRC Analyst said: ***"It created the conversation that it did around truth, around reconciliation around reparations, around justice. That I think has been a major success."***

***"The Commission is of the view that gross violations of human rights were perpetrated or facilitated by all the major players in the conflicts of 1960 to 1994. At the same time, the Commission is not of the view that all such parties can be held to be equally culpable. The preponderance of responsibility rests with the State and Its allies."*** TRC Report, Volume 5, 1998



**The successes of the TRC**

**Wendy Orr**

Commissioner  
Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission

*This video was produced by the Apartheid Museum as part of its permanent installation on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).*



White people in particular were sheltered from the reality of life under apartheid and the violent human rights abuses that the state perpetrated. The testimonies at the TRC revealed the brutality of the apartheid state.

**“I think it is very hard to deny now that torture was routine, in detention. That there were hit squads, that there was a Vlakplaas, that there was a chemical and biological warfare programmes. So we can no longer pretend that that didn't happen. So in terms of putting the truth in the face of the South African public, I think the truth commission was very successful,” says Wendy Orr, TRC Commissioner.**

A seven volume report was published that captured the process, recommendations and findings. All these reports can be downloaded

 [\*\*Click here to download it.\*\*](#)



**Long-lasting impact of the TRC**  
**Mbongiseni Buthelezi**

Senior Researcher and Analyst  
Truth and Reconciliation Commission

*This video was produced by the Apartheid Museum as part of its permanent installation on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).*

The ultimate finding was that the apartheid government was the main perpetrator of gross human rights violations. The Commission found more than 22 000 people had been victims of gross human rights violations. 7 111 applications for amnesty were made, 5 392 of these applications were refused and only 849 were granted.

Restorative justice typically brings together perpetrators and victims so that offenders take responsibility for their actions and understand the harm they have caused and give them an opportunity to redeem themselves. While for victims, its goal is to give them a voice and to reduce feelings of anxiety and powerlessness.



### **Reflections of victims**

**Yasmin Sooka**

Commissioner

Truth and Reconciliation

Commission



*This video was produced by the Apartheid Museum as part of its permanent installation on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).*

“Heartlines wanted to create a space for South Africans to learn about other's stories. The strategic thrust was to create opportunities to spark spontaneous conversations that help people understand each other better and create connections in their communities,” says Garth Japhet Heartlines CEO.

To achieve this objective Heartlines conceptualised a feature film, *Beyond the River*, supported by a multimedia campaign #WhatsYourStory?

## **Problem**

The TRC is considered successful at establishing the truth and confirming what really transpired during apartheid. But there is debate about whether the TRC achieved the aim of reconciliation. Watch this video with reflections from TRC analysts about the long-lasting impact of the TRC.

Mbongiseni Buthelezi, Senior Researcher and TRC Analyst says: **“There is a lot of rage about how little things have changed and I’m beginning to think more and more that justice and the prosecution of some of those perpetrators would be part of dealing with that sort of rage that people feel about how things have just not changed.”**

Elizabeth Mokoena says: **“We went to the TRC, we hoped that it would restore the dignity... [and relieve] the pain I experienced under apartheid.”**

South Africa is still a deeply unequal society, prejudices and inequality persist and misconceptions continue to divide people. There are still high levels of unemployment and inequality.

## **The Strategic Objective**

Heartlines aimed to continue the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It sought to do this through a feature film called *Beyond the River*, and a campaign entitled What’s Your Story? to promote a process of reconciliation and create a culture of respect, tolerance and trust in order to improve social cohesion.

## **Audience**

The primary intended audience of the campaign was the South African public in general with a specific focus on families, faith-based organisations, workplaces and school learners.



## Partnerships

Heartlines established partnerships to ensure the effective roll out of the campaign. Below are examples of some of the partnerships established.

- **Heartlines Management Team:** A team at Heartlines was set up in order to conduct research, develop the message brief and act as keeper of the message. They also worked closely with the production company and script writer to ensure that the messages were carefully integrated into the storylines.
- **Broadcast partner:** MNET, a pay TV channel, was instrumental not just in broadcasting the film but provided invaluable support with marketing the cinema release of the film.
- **Service Providers:** A production company, Quizzical Pictures, was selected which had a strong reputation for producing quality entertainment television as well as Edutainment.
- **Funding partners:** A broad spectrum of funders were found for the campaign which included government agencies and the private sector. For example, AdReach, Discovery, National Lotteries Commission, Vodacom, Department of Trade and Industry, National Film and Video Foundation, KZN Film Commission, MNET, Lombard Insurance.

## Lessons learned

### Step 1: Key decisions



- Start with an understanding of the environment.
- Have a good understanding of the problem and define it clearly. Do not hesitate to consult experts in the field.
- Once you understand the problem, set your objectives. Be realistic about what you can achieve.
- Clearly define your target audience, in terms of geography, socio-economic, gender, age, etc. You may want to reach one or several audiences. The more specific you are, the easier it will be to understand how to reach them.
- Understand whether your problem is local, regional or national. Above all, understand how far you can go with your human and financial resources.
- Do not underestimate the value of your allies. They can do a lot for you. Spend time and effort building these relationships.
- Donors or funders should not just be resource providers. They can do much more.
- Choose your team carefully. If possible, hire them full time. Edutainment is time demanding and needs expertise.
- Carefully analyze the property rights of the materials produced. Usually, the financiers demand ownership, but there are multiple co-production figures that can be studied



Step 2

# Formative Research

## The EE Route

1 - Key decisions

● **2 - Formative research**

● 3 - From research to message

● 4 - The story is the message

● 5 - Designing a multimedia strategy

● 6 - Pre-testing

● 7 - Production

● 8 - Promotion

● 9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

“ By getting in the shoes of the people who lived through these heartbreaking and shocking events, we understand that what happens out there are more than just numbers: they are the voices of victims who need to be heard. ”

- Student 11th grade. Bogotá 2016.

**Chapter overview:** explains how to conduct formative research, characteristics of good research, and provides an analysis of the environment and context.

## Formative Research



[Formative research](#)



This chapter looks at how to conduct formative research to inform your Edutainment programme. The aim with this type of research is to obtain information from the literature, stakeholders and target audience, and to use this information to develop messages and material that can help people improve their lives.

Edutainment uses tools such as booklets, posters, radio and television programmes to influence ordinary people and their environments in a way that will improve people's quality of life. For Edutainment to be effective, it should speak to people in a way that they can relate to and that they feel is real. They must identify with the content of the material and feel that it addresses their concerns.

Your Edutainment initiative must take into consideration what people already know, think, believe, feel and do about the issue you are tackling. It must also address the external factors that prevent people from making positive changes or from exercising their human rights.

In order to achieve this, Edutainment needs to be rooted in quality research. The qualitative research methods described in this chapter are well suited to provide rich, contextually sensitive information to feed into your Edutainment.

## The place of formative research in the production process

- 1.** Topics or issues to address are decided on the basis of evidence and an analysis of development needs and priorities in the country.
- 2.** These topics are further explored and developed in consultation with key stakeholders in the field, on the basis of literature reviews and information obtained from the target audience.
- 3.** All the information from these different sources is integrated and presented at a Message Design Workshop. In this workshop role-players decide what needs to be communicated to the target audience.
- 4.** The outcome of this workshop, together with background material emerging through the formative research process, is written up in a message brief that is given to the creative team for example, the script-writers, copy-writers and producers.
- 5.** A detailed outline of the series is compiled, with detail of characters and storyline.
- 6.** Scripts are written. In the case of print material, the copy for the print publication is drafted.
- 7.** At this point, the draft Edutainment materials are pre-tested. Pre-testing involves getting feedback from all stakeholders, including the target audience and experts in the field, on the draft Edutainment materials. This is to make sure that the messages are clear and the language is appropriate.
- 8.** The final draft of the Edutainment is developed taking changes into account.
- 9.** After this lengthy but thorough process, actual production starts on your programmes.



## Information from the target audience is gathered twice

- 1. In the beginning,** to understand the needs, views, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of the target audience in relation to your topic.
- 2. A second time,** when you test drafts (e.g. draft scripts, draft copy for print publications or even early versions of actual electronic productions) with the target audience to ensure among other things there are no unintended messages.

For clarity, the first type will be referred to as ‘message development research’ and the second as ‘pre-testing’. But both are formative audience research tools used in the production process for Edutainment.

There are different ways of getting information from people. Qualitative research is one approach. It is a very open approach where the emphasis is on exploring and understanding people’s life experiences, views and behaviour.

## Characteristics of qualitative audience research

- Qualitative researchers try to understand people’s views and experiences, without putting words in their mouths or influencing them.
- A qualitative researcher focuses on what people themselves are able to say about their lives.
- A qualitative researcher is sensitive to different contexts in which people live, including cultural contexts. They try to understand how people are influenced by the unique contexts and circumstances in which they live, and in which they form their opinions and exercise their choices.



- Qualitative researchers recognise that people with similar life experiences may be similar in many ways. But the experiences and the meanings that people attach to these experiences are unique and are expressed in unique ways.
- A qualitative researcher needs an open-minded approach and excellent listening skills more than anything else. Good listening skills first and foremost means respecting people. It also means learning to hear what people are really saying and not hearing what we want to hear.
- Qualitative researchers apply the everyday skill of showing interest in what people have to say and in what they experience in a rigorous manner. They strive to obtain information from people in a non-leading and non-directive way.
- Qualitative researchers also recognise that they influence the people they interview and may influence the answers that people give. Critical self-reflection is very important.

#### • What qualitative research is not

Qualitative research is not about how many people said something:

- It is not about counting responses from research participants, or adding up responses in the form of tables
- It is not a way of getting lots of superficial information from lots and lots of people (e.g. hundreds of people)
- Qualitative research is not a way of finding out how many people have seen or hear a programme or read a booklet

#### • Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews can be conducted in groups or on an individual basis. An interview that is conducted with a group of people (usually between 9 and 12 carefully selected people) is called a **Focus Group Interview**. An interview that is conducted with an individual is sometimes called an **In-depth Interview**.

#### • Question formulation

An “open question” is one that is not leading and not directive. This means that the question is asked in a way that does not favour a particular answer. It also makes it difficult for the interviewee to give short yes/no answers and encourages them to speak in their own words. For example, consider the question “Did you like this booklet?” The answer can be “yes” or “no”. If you asked, “What did you think of this booklet?” the interviewee can say anything. This is an example of non-directive interviewing.



- **Basic qualitative interviewing technique**

In a basic qualitative interview, a researcher or fieldworker interviews one person at a time. The basic qualitative interview uses a handful of interviewing techniques. Mastering these techniques is very important. By using these techniques optimally, the interviewer engages in and communicates active listening and respect. They give interviewees the space to explore their own ideas, experiences, thoughts and feelings, and express these in their own terms. Throughout the course of the interview, the interviewer maintains an encouraging, open and attentive attitude, communicating positive regard for the research participant.

In a basic qualitative interview, a researcher asks an interviewee one open and non-directive question and follows up with probing questions to seek clarification on the responses. They give reflective summaries to display listening and respect, and to structure the interview.

A good qualitative interviewer does not display prejudice or a judgemental attitude in the interview. He or she does not have to personally agree or disagree with the views of the research participant. However, in conducting the interview, it is important not to display disapproval or to pass judgement. The interview is after all conducted to access the experiences and views of the research participant, and not those of the interviewer.

- **In-depth interviews**

In an in-depth interview the researcher interviews one person at a time. All characteristics of a qualitative interview are adhered to. However, in an in-depth interview, a researcher also employs “depth techniques”. These are aimed at getting a deeper understanding of the interviewee. The interviewer asks “why” and skilfully confronts the interviewee if their responses seem contradictory.



## • Focus group interviews

A focus group has the following features:

- A focus group interview is conducted with a small group of people, often with a similar demographic profile, selected on the basis of the specific needs of the research project.
- The ideal size of a focus group is between 9 and 12 people. The exchange between people in a focus group interview makes for rich descriptions and enhances the researcher's understanding of the issue at hand.
- A focus group interview uses the same interviewing techniques as in-depth interviews but adapted to a group setting.
- A standard focus group interview usually lasts between an hour and two hours at most.
- Interviews are conducted in the language of preference of the participants.
- They are usually conducted at a venue in the community that is easily accessible and convenient for participants, such as a clinic, a school hall, a church hall - even someone's house.

In-depth interviews and focus group discussions are the most commonly used methods, as they bring out rich information to inform your Edutainment. In-depth interviews are often preferred when we are interested in individual perspectives or if issues to be explored are sensitive and may not easily be discussed in a group. In Edutainment that targets people as both individuals and communities, focus group interviews are often preferred because they bring out the social construction.

Unless research participants do not give their consent to record interviews, all interviews should be recorded. When researching complex issues such as people's views, experiences, understanding and fears on sensitive topics, it is essential to have a verbatim account of the interview to analyse properly afterwards.



**How to Conduct Qualitative  
Formative Research  
The Communication Initiative**

- **Transcribing, translating**

After the interviews (focus groups, in-depth interviews) are completed, you need to transcribe the recorded interviews verbatim, then translate and analyse the transcripts. Transcribing an interview means writing down what was said in the interview verbatim. This is an important step in the research process because it enables thorough data analysis to take place. If we do not get good transcripts, we lose valuable information that would help us design messages that are appropriate and relevant to the target audiences. Do not summarise or interpret the interviews, rather write them down verbatim/word-for-word. Once you have the transcripts, researchers need to analyse them.

- **Analysis and writing up findings**

In everyday life we use the word analysis differently. When we say to someone “What is your analysis of the situation?” we are asking them for their interpretation or understanding of an event or issue. However, in research, analysis is different. It is more rigorous and more disciplined. It is important that your researchers understand and have experience of this kind of research.

In qualitative formative research, we often employ thematic qualitative analysis. This is where information or data is ordered into patterns that are found in the data itself and then systematically analysed. This involves reading the verbatim transcriptions, coding the data (that is, identifying essential meanings of each response), and categorising the codes in similar themes or families. The themes and patterns emerging from the data are therefore reported in a write-up supported by selected direct quotations.

Qualitative interviewing, analysis and reporting is a skill that takes time and practice to learn. You will need to contract skilled researchers to conduct your research. This chapter was designed to give you an overview of what you are looking for.



# Colombian Case Study

“ When the children get into a fight, we all go to the river together, we pick up stones and back in the classroom, we all make a stone circle and sit around it - in what I like to call a PEACE CIRCLE. There, in that safe space, we resolve the conflict in a peaceful and calm manner”

- Formative research. Breaking the Silence. Colombia.

## Formative research

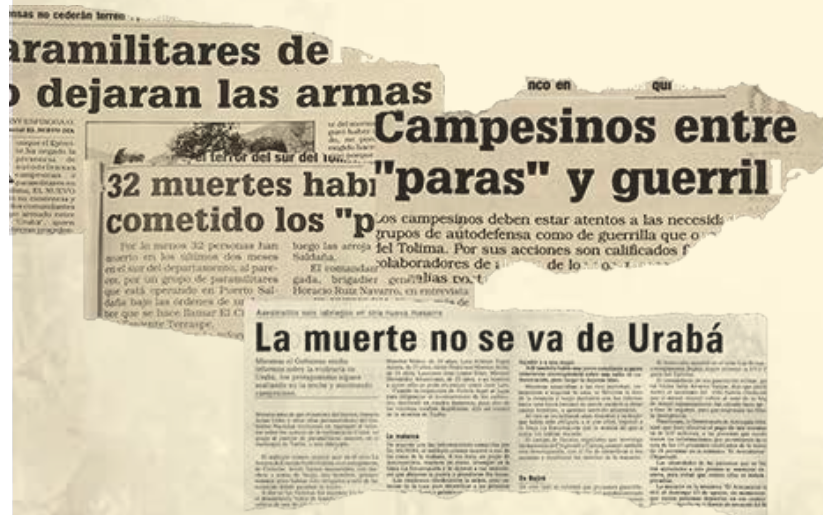
The objective of the formative research was to find out about the knowledge, attitudes and feelings of our audiences around four main themes. These were: conflict, truth, restorative justice, peace and coexistence. We also wanted to collect stories to form the basis of our central narrative.

## Secondary Information

### • Literature

30 bibliographic sources were initially reviewed including academic, indexed peer reviewed journals, documents from official State institutions, “gray literature” (documents, policy papers, videos, interviews, reports and press releases). These sources resulted from a keyword search which included terms such as "armed conflict", "peace agreements", "violence", "truth", "justice", "reparation and non-repetition", "peace process", "human rights", "guarantee of rights", "post-conflict", as well as documents suggested by experts.

Of the articles reviewed, many highlight the importance of positioning the concept of truth and narrating the events that took place during the conflict with veracity. And also, of questioning values, attitudes, traditions, behaviors and existing ways of life so that something new can emerge. They also highlight the importance of accepting conflict as part of our history and understanding the multiple and diverse narratives that have emerged.





- **The experts**

More than 20 experts with a wide variety of knowledge were consulted in this phase, who participated voluntarily and with great commitment. Contributions worth noting include:

- Understanding the history of the conflict and its structural causes
- Learning about the different ways of dealing with conflict
- Restorative and transitional justice and its characteristics
- The Comprehensive Peace System in Colombia
- Education experiences dealing with memory, reconciliation, history and citizenship. Two significant concepts that stood out were the value of dialogue in conflict resolution and the need to encourage historic critical thinking rather than imparting fact based learning.

- **Other experiences in the world**

A central component of the formative research was identifying global Edutainment leaders who have designed strategies in contexts of social crisis and upheaval. These contributors include Heartlines in South Africa, BBC Media Action's social and behaviour change programmes in Myanmar and Indonesia and Singizi, a consultancy company who led Heartlines' evaluation.

### **Focus groups and Interviews**

At the end of this stage, it was decided to use qualitative methods to deepen our knowledge of the target audiences and their context. Twenty focus groups and six in-depth interviews were carried out with adolescents aged 12 to 14, parents and teachers from the 10 macro-regions established by the Truth Commission. This covered the whole country, except Colombians in exile, a priority group. A total of 138 people from all socio-economic strata, of different political tendencies, direct victims of the armed conflict or not, participated. The group and individual conversations took place virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



### **Barriers**

**Juana Marulanda**

Content Coordinator

Breaking the Silence

Imaginario Foundation



The collective discussion after the research was conducted was an important part of the analysis of the information collected.

## **Some recommendations from the formative research**

- Create spaces to talk about the armed conflict and peace building. There is a silence imposed by fear and mistrust. People do not talk about the conflict at home, at school or on the street corner. However, the possibility of talking with others about the armed conflict, peace, truth and reconciliation in a "normal" way is highly valued, making it possible to learn, to express one's own and other people's opinions.
- Propose methods of conversation where, in spite of differences, people can be respected, without resorting to violence.
- Encourage an interest in knowing the history of the country in order to understand the reasons for the armed conflict in Colombia and the role of different sectors in society.
- Work on issues that fueled the conflict such as racism, colonialism and machismo.
- Provide information on restorative justice and the reasons why it is used in the framework of the Peace Agreement in Colombia.
- Build trust in the transparency and objectivity of the Truth Commission, the peace process and in the institutions of the Comprehensive System for Peace and in its results.
- Create awareness of the value of truth as a public good and as a reference for the construction of coexistence. Truth is healing, both for the victim and the perpetrator, because it helps rebuild trust.
- Provide skills for teachers and parents to promote critical historical thinking
- Emphasise coexistence as a scenario for the recognition of human rights.
- Emphasise empathy as a condition to avoid repeating the same conflict in the future.
- Highlight successful experiences of coexistence.
- Offer materials and training to deal with conflict issues at school.



### The strategic approach

Based on the findings and recommendations, it was decided that the central focus of the strategy would be an invitation to the country to **Break the Silence**. Each component would then work to open spaces for dialogue and generate informed debate and historical critical thinking about truth, justice, reparation and new strategies of non-violent conflict resolution.

The background is a faded, sepia-toned photograph of a person running in a natural setting. At the bottom, the words "EL SILENCIO" are written in large, 3D, light-colored block letters. A small, colorful butterfly is flying in the lower right area of the image.

EL SILENCIO



## South African Case Study

### Formative Research

#### Conceptualising Beyond the River

At the outset of the research and planning phase of the project Heartlines began the formative research that would ultimately result in the Beyond the River film and the supporting #WhatsYourStory? campaign. This included a literature review and a series of focus groups that informed the campaign objective, the approach, media formats and the main messages that would be used in the campaign.

- **Literature review**

"At the start of the project we undertook a detailed literature review to get a complete picture of the work that was being done on reconciliation globally and to understand the key factors that enabled reconciliation within these interventions," explained Garth Japhet, Heartlines CEO.

The literature review sought to understand the key reconciliatory theories, principles and narratives that were being used at the time and how these were being implemented in South Africa and across the world. This process identified several models of reconciliation including individual reconciliation, societal reconciliation and restorative justice approaches. The literature review also identified that the establishment of the rule of law, restoration of relationships, socio-economic redress and robust and sustained debate are four elements critical to a reconciliation process. It also looked into the role of storytelling in dealing with trauma.

The literature review concluded that "the Heartlines reconciliation project needed to focus on restoring relationships and must speak to individuals and communities and encourage them to actively participate in a reconciliation project," explains Japhet. By focusing on restoring relationships the Heartlines campaign could deal with people's beliefs, awareness, actions and feelings.





“The sharing of stories would be a good place to begin getting to know each other. When I listen to someone else’s story, I begin to see them as a person with hopes, fears, dreams, etc. If we did nothing else but listen to each other’s stories, we would be succeeding.”

- Focus Group Participant, Formative Research

• Focus groups

Following the literature review process Heartlines adopted a qualitative research methodology and hosted a series of focus groups with the key target audiences and stakeholders. These focus groups included between eight and 10 people with a mix of black, Indian, coloured (mixed-race) and white adults from a range of residential areas in Johannesburg.

At these focus groups participants were asked to reflect on issues of race and ethnicity, xenophobia, their hopes and dreams for South Africa and what they thought about their race in South Africa. Participants were asked for their opinions on reconciliation and the role of economic transformation and justice in the transformation process. They were also asked for their opinions on if they felt a national reconciliation campaign could benefit South Africa and what a South Africa “for all” would look like.

“In Setswana [reconciliation] means, we are coming back to each other. Something happened in the journey and we have to look for ways of coming back to each other.” Participant, Formative Research

Many participants saw the valuing in knowing the ‘other’. One participant said: “Let’s not complicate it; let’s just say: One of the key things keeping us apart is that we don’t know each other.”



Focus group discussion with key stakeholders.



**A great metaphor for  
South Africa**  
**Jennifer Charlton**  
Executive Producer  
Heartlines



The sessions showed that there was an appetite for a national reconciliation campaign that interrogated race and ethnic relations in South Africa. Following these sessions Heartlines made the decision to develop a campaign that aimed to initiate dialogue between South Africans to drive a national reconciliation project.

“You actually need to know each other’s stories to be able to work together well, to be able to really pull together. Even in the movie the two guys in the same boat, it’s a great metaphor for South Africa, that we’re all in the same boat together and if we learn more about each other, if we trust each other more it can really lead to a transformed South Africa,” says Jennifer Charlton, Heartlines Executive Producer.

### **Defining the campaign approach**

Following the focus group sessions a workshop was convened with key stakeholders including faith-based organisations, NGOs, activists in the reconciliation space as well as members of the creative team including writers. This session was a space for people to share stories and in this session the key campaign concept of ‘what’s your story’ emerged.

All the main project partners agreed that Heartlines would develop a campaign that prompted South Africans to get to know one another and that through dialogue the process of reconciliation could begin.

Heartlines identified that they wanted to create a platform that deals with race, identity and reconciliation. It was agreed that the campaign should never be heavy handed but should ultimately make a difference to South Africans in terms of helping people to understand themselves and each other.



*Beyond the River*

## Lessons learned

### Step 2: Formative research



- First review all available information on the problem. Get advice from people who are knowledgeable on the subject so that you don't get lost in tons of information. Clearly identify information gaps and focus your research on those gaps or on aspects you want to go deeper into.
- The best sources of information are your target audiences, the people you want to reach.
- Qualitative techniques enable you to gain a deeper understanding of these audiences.
- Formative research should be done following a good methodological design which prevents researchers from getting lost along the way. It is essential to be advised by a person with research experience.
- Focus groups and interviews should be facilitated by people with experience and dialogue skills.
- Do not rely on your memory. Record and transcribe.
- The results of the formative research are the most valuable input you will have for designing your strategy. Read and reread it over and over to reveal useful insights every time.
- Design messages, choose media, create stories while keeping the formative research in mind.
- Share your findings with the creative team and everyone involved in the strategy.



## Step 3

# From Research to message

**“** You actually need to know each other’s stories to be able to work together well, to be able to really pull together. Even in the movie the two guys in the same boat, it’s a great metaphor for South Africa, that we’re all in the same boat together and if we learn more about each other, if we trust each other more it can really lead to a transformed South Africa. **”**

- Jennifer Charlton, Heartlines Executive Producer.

### The EE Route

- 1 - Key decisions
- 2 - Formative research
- 3 - From research to message**
- 4 - The story is the message
- 5 - Designing a multimedia strategy
- 6 - Pre-testing
- 7 - Production
- 8 - Promotion
- 9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

**Chapter overview:** this chapter focuses on the Message Brief document, which sets out the main issues to be addressed and the key messages you want to promote.



## Developing the message and story

Once you have completed the research phase you are ready to start developing your chosen Edutainment. In this chapter, we will discuss how to design the messages that your Edutainment is going to promote and integrate these into a powerful story line.

### Stage 1: Message Design Workshop

The first step is to design the message or messages. The messages come from your research findings; focus groups, in-depth interviews, a literature review and discussions with topic experts.

- **A note about messages**

Messages are not simply pieces of information which you want to raise awareness about. Messages are also transformative changes that you want to see happen in your community or society. For example “South Africans can build social cohesion by getting to know one another” is not a simple message. It is a challenge to a social norm, to how people of different races interact.



Through the journey of characters that audiences identify with, messages are woven into a dramatic story of change. Characters come to challenge the status quo. They learn to act and behave differently. When you develop messages, go back to your social and behaviour change theory (Chapter 1) and reflect on the different pathways of change. It is a useful window through which to design them.

- **Message design workshop**

One way to design messages is to have a Message Design Workshop

The people who attend the Message Design Workshop are:

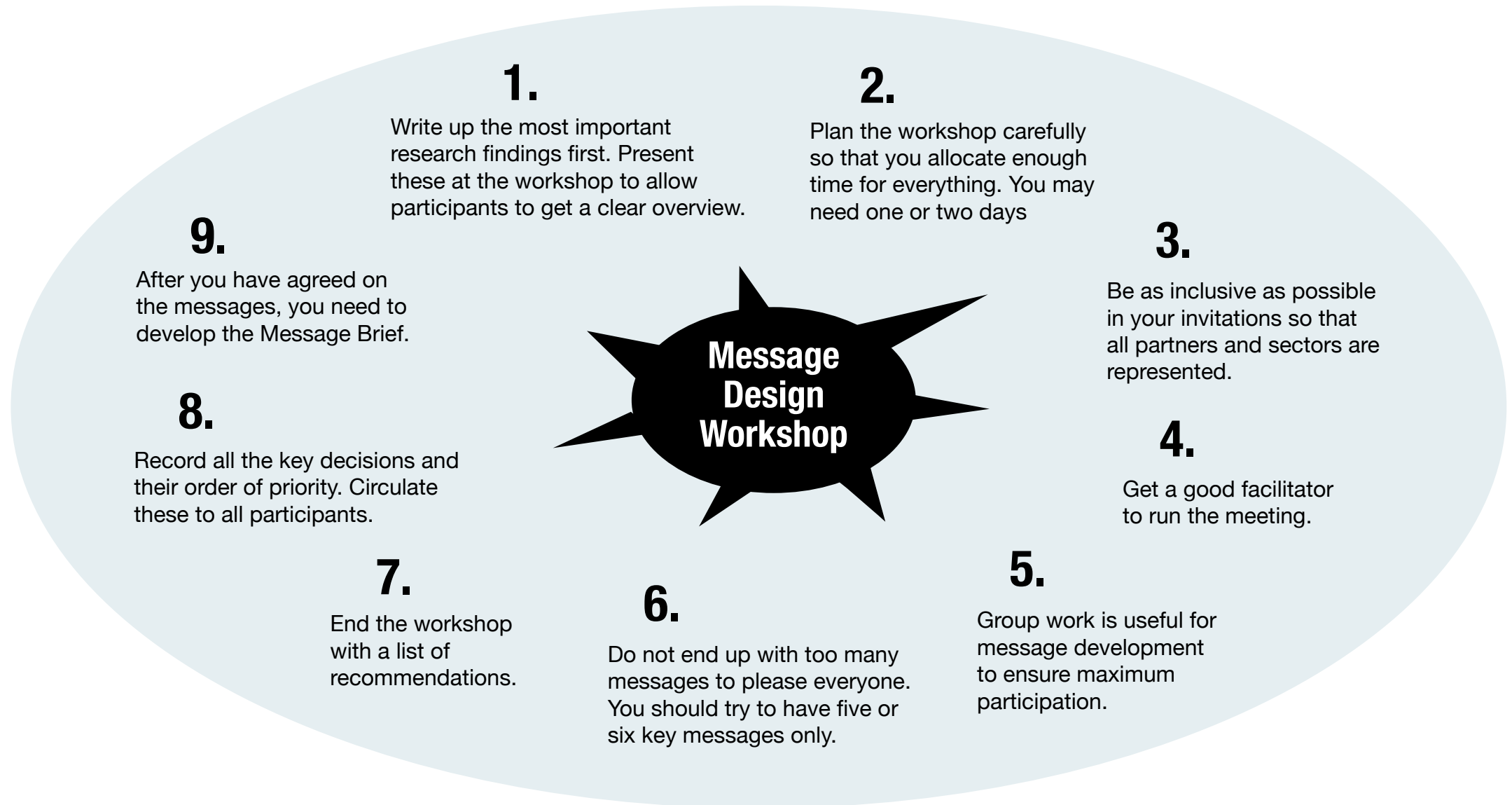
- **Your project management team**
- **The creative team (producers, writers, editors)**
- **As many topic experts as possible**
- **The research team who will report back on research undertaken**
- **Other stakeholders (government officials, private sector players and civil society organisations).**

The aim of the workshop is to identify and prioritise the messages of your Edutainment, based on the research findings. Workshop participants should reach consensus on the main messages and prioritise these in order of importance. The workshop will also help the creative team understand the topic, research and complexities of change better. This will really enrich the dramatic story.

It is also useful to select key people as a “reference group” to provide ongoing advice and support. Ask topic experts to choose one or two people to represent them, throughout the development process.

- **Planning for the message design workshop**

Here are a few tips that will help make the Message Design Workshop run smoothly:



## Stage 2: Write a message brief

After the meeting, someone in your management team must write a Message Brief. A Message Brief is a fairly detailed document that captures the decisions made at the Message Design Workshop. The purpose of the Message Brief is to have a consensus document, a shared guide on the agreed messages and their order of priority as well as the research that informed them.

- **The Message Custodian**

In Edutainment, a key figure in the team is the Message Custodian. This person has a deep knowledge of the strategy and plays an important role in guiding the development of the Message Brief and reviews at every step of the process the messages, to ensure that the stories really communicate the messages. They also look out for any unintentional messages, inaccuracies, inconsistencies and inappropriate language.

- **Broad messages for your Edutainment**

There may be broad messages that you want to carry through the entire series. For example, communities must work together to uplift themselves and improve their quality of life. Try to limit the number of messages that you choose. Four or five key messages at most, is probably enough. But this is of course a guide, and not a rule.



**The Message Brief**

## The final message brief should contain:

- The broad messages in order of priority
- The detailed information required around each message
- The background to each message (possibly including a summary of the literature review and of the findings from your audience research)
- Appendices which contain relevant information for different members of the creative team, if applicable
- Any additional documents which will help your creative team to understand exactly what you want from them. For example, you may include transcripts from focus groups, to help writers develop stories based on real-life examples.





## Colombian Case Study

### From research to message

“We’re not reciting these messages through various communication pieces. We are building stories that are messages in their own right.”

- Juana Marulanda. Content Director  
Romper el Silencio, Imaginario Foundation

One of the most complex processes of this strategy was the construction of the Message Brief. During the formative research stage which took 10 months, the entire research team and three advisors listened first-hand to the life experiences, hopes and feelings of adolescents, parents and teachers in 20 focus groups and six in-depth interviews.

With all the knowledge acquired the team produced a thorough background paper and created a draft Message Brief, to discuss during a preliminary Message Workshop with a diverse group of experts; however, no specific messages were arrived at, but rather some general guidelines to further develop a Message Brief.

Given the complexity of the topic, we also invited the support of a political scientist with extensive experience in memory, history and pedagogics on the Colombian conflict. She became our Message Guardian and key advisor on the historical critical thinking perspective.

Based on the overall goal and the specific objectives, 5 pillars were defined:

- 1) Build understanding of the values, norms and practices that fuel violent conflict resolution.**
- 2) Create awareness of truth in order to move from conflict to democratic coexistence.**
- 3) Explain restorative justice and its contribution to dealing with the past.**
- 4) Exemplify symbolic reparation (non-repetition, restitution and repatriation, compensation, satisfaction, and rehabilitation), and validation of the victims’ experiences.**
- 5) Build a historical understanding of the armed conflict and how this critical approach contributes to peace-building.**



For each pillar, key messages were established in the private and political spheres.

**Pillar I:**

Coexistence. the understanding of the values and practices that fuel violent conflict resolution

**Main message:**

*To coexist without violence, we have to understand that there are no first or second-class citizens. We all have the same worth and rights.*

**Pillar II:**

The contributions of truth in order to move from conflict to democratic coexistence

**Main message:**

*Truth brings us reparation and is a path towards liberation. Truth heals hearts and souls.*

**Pillar III:**

Restorative justice and its contributions to dealing with the past

**Main message:**

*No one can play executioner in life, but those who have caused harm must repent, recognise and repair.*

**Pillar IV:**

Symbolic reparation and the validation of the victims' accounts of their experiences

**Main message:**

*When we are listened to, we feel held. Listening to the victims, believing them and empathising with them, creates a sense of worth.*

**PILAR IV:**

Historical understanding of the armed conflict and its contribution to alternative strategies to peacebuilding

**Main message:**

*Knowing and understanding why and how it all happened, helps us ensure that the armed conflict does not repeat itself again.*



## South African Case Study

“ *The Heartlines reconciliation project needed to focus on restoring relationships and must speak to individuals and communities and encourage them to actively participate in a reconciliation project.*”

- Garth Japhet, Heartlines CEO.

### Arriving at #What'sYourStory

Heartlines hosted a message design workshop that included the project team, key stakeholders and the creative team.

After analysing the literature review and insights from the focus groups the team identified 10 key messages that the film and #WhatsYourStory? campaign should promote.

The messages included: Honesty in coming to terms with our past; developing a culture of love, respect, acceptance and empathy for others; gratitude for the peaceful transition to a non-racial democracy.

These were distilled into three key messages that were captured in the message brief:

**Celebrating difference: the value of inclusion and acceptance**

**Keeping it real: the value of authenticity**

**Beyond indifference: the value of empathy and compassion**



*Beyond the River*



**The story of  
Beyond the River**



The project team developed a message brief that included these three messages and detailed information that unpacked each key message, a summary of the literature review, key insights from the focus groups as well as background information. The creative team used this message brief to conceptualise the story. We adapted a real life story.

“It really was a story where we had two people who by learning more about each other, had managed to come together and achieve something that was quite difficult to achieve,” says Jennifer Charlton, Heartlines Executive Producer.

These themes were woven into the film and they were also featured in the #WhatsYourStory? campaign. A number of short format documentaries were produced as part of the #WhatsYourStory? Campaign. In the films, ordinary people tell their stories which capture the themes in different ways.

**Cherry's story** looks at the power of inclusion and acceptance from the perspective of a foreign national living in Johannesburg. **Quinton's story** highlights the role of authenticity when beginning a journey of reconciliation, his honest acknowledgment of how he benefited from apartheid was key to connecting with people of all races. Gosiamo and Derek's story touches on the importance of empathy and compassion in the reconciliation process and that there are different perspectives on the past. Their story unpacks how South Africans of all races experienced some form of trauma during apartheid.



## Lessons learned

### Step 3: From research to messages



- Ensure that the entire team involved in constructing the messages knows and understands the objectives of the strategy and the findings of the formative research process.
- Value the community's input during the process.
- Do not try to be exhaustive. A strategy cannot communicate everything. There must be priorities. It is best to have a limited number of messages - four or five key messages are enough - in order to communicate them effectively.
- There are more general messages which can be inserted into every piece of content. There are more specific ones that are better suited to certain pieces. Don't try to include every message in every piece.
- Think carefully about which message suits which medium.
- During the creation and production process of the pieces, it is advisable to check if the key messages are being communicated.
- The messages in the Message Brief should not be transcribed verbatim into your EE stories and programmes. They are ideas which should be communicated through the stories and characters.
- Value the work of the research, subject matter experts and the communications team, even if tensions arise. They will contribute to a balance between depth, clarity and accessibility of messages.



## Step 4

# The Story is the Message

**“** It's like in a Netflix series, very emotional, brought tears to my eyes, very much what I hoped would happen: beautiful, and educational. It's very important, and that there would be a true reconciliation, which is an ending that I hope is possible in my country: That we learn to forgive and to live with the “other”, who we know acted against what we believe in; it's the same case for the guerrillas and victims: each one acted from their own rationale... **”**

- Pretesting, first draft scripts - Breaking the Silence, Colombia

### The EE Route

1 - Key decisions

2 - Formative research

3 - From research to message

**4 - The story is the message**

5 - Designing a multimedia strategy

6 - Pre-testing

7 - Production

8 - Promotion

9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

**Chapter overview:** this chapter looks at how to integrate messages into your story and EE initiative.

## The story emerges

### The creative workshop

After the writers and creative team have received the message brief (and have had time to think about it!), you need to convene another workshop, this time specifically for the creative team. The purpose of the Creative Workshop is to develop broad story lines and characters.

There is usually intense discussion and a great deal of feedback between all participants. This is the moment when you try to integrate entertainment with education making sure that neither one dominates or overshadows the other. It is best to find ways to embed the messages seamlessly in the story itself rather than tack it on to a story that is not central. For example, a dramatic storyline of a person being the victim of violence at the hands of the state will allow the audience to feel their pain. This is more powerful than just inserting dialogue where two people talk about political violence.

The creative team will want to focus on an action-packed drama filled with suspense and intrigue. Your organisational team will mainly be concerned with messages. Script writers will come with their own, occasionally misguided, ideas. Topic experts will have their own fixed views of what is right and wrong.

Writers may also want to use scare tactics to shock audiences into changing their behaviour. However, research has found scare tactics usually don't have any lasting impact. They also can do damage by pushing issues underground, making it harder to bring about change or even reinforce the status quo.



*For Edutainment to be effective, the audience has to become emotionally involved. People must relate to the stories and empathise with the characters. Emotional involvement in a drama allows audiences to live out their hopes and fears through other people.*

## **Guidelines for integrating messages into a drama**

- **Coherence and integrity**

Your target audience does not respond only to the messages. They engage with the Edutainment as a whole - the setting, plot, characters and action. In the case of an Edutainment series or multimedia Edutainment, the audience interacts with an entire series or a range of media.

Ensure that messages in different media don't contradict or undermine each other. Make sure that there are no hidden or unintended messages. For example, that the male characters in the drama always make decisions. That people who are poor are always victims of their circumstances. Or that children always do as they are told and never think or act for themselves.

- **Mix entertainment and education**

Some issues are more easily dramatised than others. Think carefully about which message suits which medium. For example, a drama is good for exploring condom use and how women have the right to insist on using condoms. However, the detail of how to put on a condom and use it properly is probably best illustrated in a print publication or possibly on a cell phone platform. Try not to lecture the audience or give them lots of facts. Characters should speak and act naturally and not be spokespeople for a message.

- **Emotional involvement and trust**

For Edutainment to be effective, the audience has to become emotionally involved. People must relate to the stories and empathise with the characters. Emotional involvement in a drama allows audiences to live out their hopes and fears through other people. The characters in the drama can express strong emotions on behalf of the audience. The audience must identify with the characters and the choices they face. They must see the story as relevant to their own lives. Stories work best when they move and entertain us, when they jog our deepest beliefs and fears, touch our hearts and challenge us to reflect on the values and ideas we live by.



- **Culturally believable**

Make sure that the story is culturally believable, relevant and authentic. Be careful of mistakes in dress, activity or belief. These issues can distance your audience from the story, as well as from the issues you are raising. Instead of engaging with the messages they are concerned with unintended cultural errors.

- **Role models**

Try to role model intended behaviour or values through your characters. The actions of a character whom the audience has learnt to love and trust are worth more than a hundred speeches. Establishing a role model in a drama series takes time. But once the character has won the hearts of the audience, you can use the actor to promote your messages, even outside the drama.

Another approach is to use people who are already role models in real life and integrate them into the drama as themselves. For instance, a national football star giving a message on non-violence is likely to be far more effective than a government official delivering the same message. But be careful that the role model's private life does not contradict the messages they are advocating.

- **Be positive**

It is important that people go away feeling empowered and uplifted, even when you are tackling difficult issues. This is not always easy. You don't want to pretend that solutions to poverty or political violence are easy to solve. But you also want to give people a sense of agency, hope and possibility. So it is good to combine Edutainment with advocacy; to address the structural barriers to change and create an enabling environment.

Create likeable characters who become empowered and make a difference in their own lives and in the lives of their community. Instead of just talking about people mobilising around an issue, show how they do this.

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forgive and to live

- **Use humour and comedy**

Humour can balance dramatic tension and carry some of your messages very effectively. However, use humour carefully. Laughter is often culturally determined. In addition, people may feel that you are trivialising a problem if you invite them to laugh about it. The pre-testing of materials will give you a good insight into your audience's likely response to humour in specific circumstances.

After the creative workshop, the creative team has the task of producing story outlines and then scripts. The story outline includes a basic outline of the story from beginning to end, as well as sketches of the main characters and their journeys. This is sometimes called a Character Bible.

After this you will pre-test the scripts or material, make final changes and then go production. It is useful to have a few guidelines to quality control during the final scripting and production stage.

- **Ensuring quality during production**

It is possible for a good script, which has been carefully crafted through a long, thorough research process, to end up being changed or almost destroyed during production. For instance, the director of a play may decide to change a script or delete an important line of dialogue without consulting you. Maybe an actor interprets a character's action in a different way to what was intended.



**Script writing**  
**Carolina Barrera**  
Head Writer  
Breaking the Silence

## Script writing

After the Creative Workshop, the writers will take that first outline and develop the story from beginning to end and build, in detail, each of the characters. They will produce a synopsis or general summary, which serves to capture the structure and coherence and to determine if the conflict presented, the profiles and story arcs are interesting enough. This summary will include a description of each of the characters, their evolution throughout the story and the relationships between them in the drama.

It is also very important to build the universe in which the story takes place: where it takes place, what that place is like, what climate it has, where each character comes from, whether or not they have a family, what life experience they bring with them, etc.



The golden rule is the story is the message. It is not a matter of transcribing the messages of the Message Brief into the communicative pieces; it is a matter of how the story itself communicates the message.

## Storyboards and scripts

The next step is the storyboard, a document often in the form of a chart, which lists the scenes or sequences of a story. It is a written account of everything that is going to happen in each episode or act of the movie. There are always several script versions and the synopsis and character profiles are often adapted and changed throughout the process. Characters and scenes can be removed and new ones added before the final version is ready.

Once the scripts have been drafted you should pre-test them with your target audience. This will ensure that the key messages are being communicated as you intended, and that the story elicits the desired emotional response.

Ideally the Message Guardian should also ensure that key messages are being effectively communicated.

## Other pieces

The creation of other communication pieces that you want to include in your strategy (radio, print, schools materials, theater, music, social media, etc.) will require additional workshops with the relevant creatives and experts.

### The suggestions to keep in mind are the same:

- **Make decisions based on evidence**
- **Keep the balance between educational and creative**
- **Pre-test**
- **Review with the Message Custodian and remember that the story is the message.**



## Colombian Case Study



### The creative team: The magic is in the mix



In designing the strategy, it was decided that the focus would be on a television fiction series. Although Colombia has a dynamic television and audiovisual industry, whose excellence in production and storytelling has been recognised in the most prestigious film and television festivals, it is uncommon to find experience in audiovisual productions based on research and evidence to address complex issues. There is little experience in the Edutainment methodology.

Thus the selection of the creative team and scriptwriters was done by identifying professionals with demonstrable successes and achievements in mainstream media and experience in social issues and productions aimed at teenagers and young people.



## How educational messages were embedded in the drama

“ It was like trying to recognize profiles of real people for character design. It was important that those of us involved in the focus groups could talk a lot with the scriptwriters...”

- Alejandro Jaramillo. Content Coordinator, *Breaking the Silence*

A most important first step was to share the formative research with the scriptwriters, including segments of the focus groups' recordings, which allowed them to learn first-hand about the experiences and feelings of teenagers, parents and teachers, who may or may not have lived through the armed conflict. The systematic and informed dialogue with the Message Guardian, with extensive knowledge of the conflict in Colombia, was vital to build credible and realistic stories, and characters with whom the audience could relate. The creative team's experience in producing mainstream entertainment was invaluable. But above all, their willingness to listen, learn, rewrite not once, but several times, to adjust to the methodology and achieve a credible, relevant and entertaining story that communicated the messages. Also, the participation of experts who drew attention to psychological, pedagogical, historical and political aspects, allowed for accuracy and credibility. Rigorousness was the hallmark of the process.

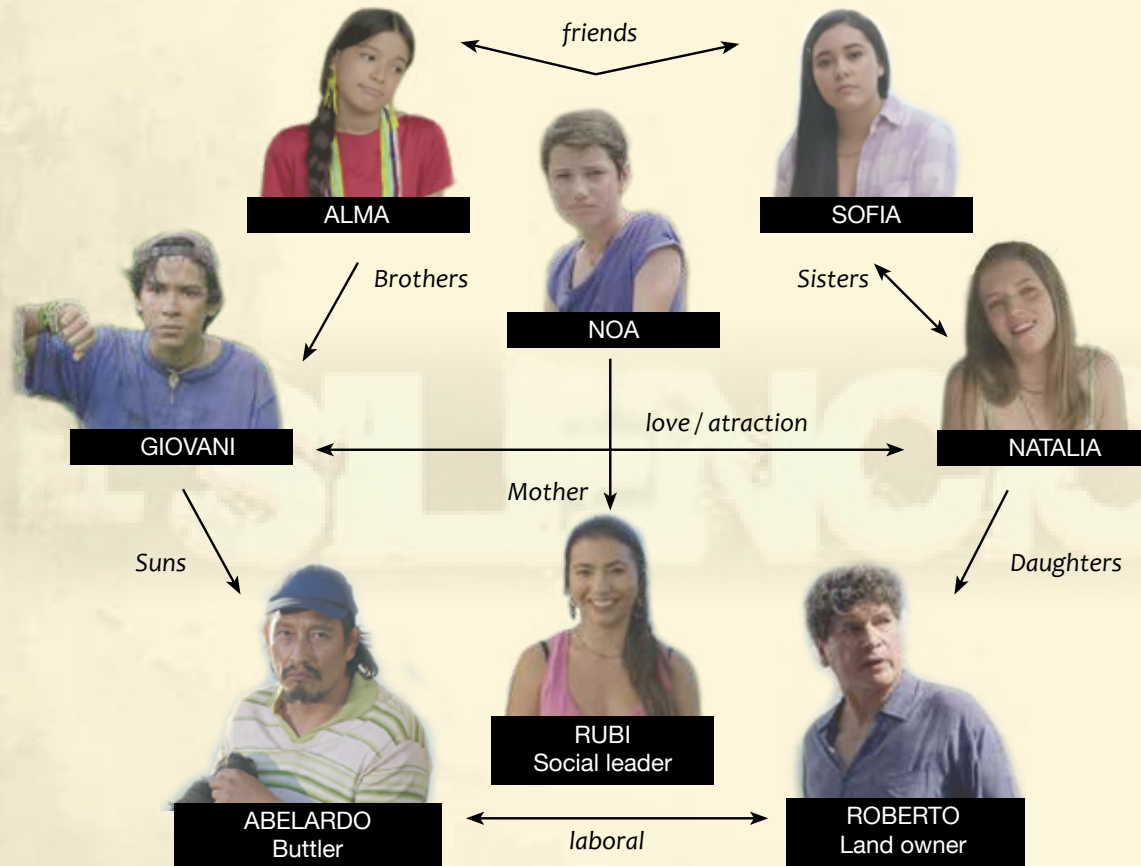
### **Pitch: each scriptwriter presents a first idea for the series.**

The great challenge was to create a story for teenagers that developed a complex topic such as the armed conflict, in a country tired of seeing violence in the media. As if they were "selling" an idea to a potential buyer, the scriptwriters pitched different stories, including the style, format, universe and main characters. Four ideas from different genres - melodrama, science fiction and adventure - were heard. Harriet Perlman's universal perspective and experience as a producer with Heartlines and Soul City was a substantial contribution to the process.

The thriller format was chosen.



### Relationship Chart



A relationship chart explains the interaction between the different characters and their role in the story.

### The heart of the story

In the middle of a school project, a group of teenagers from a small, remote village in Colombia find a corpse with a strange note. What at first seems like an adventure to find a treasure that belonged to the dead man, ends in a disturbing discovery about themselves, their community and their country. Together, they will work to discover the origin of that corpse. Without intending to, this will lead them to heal themselves, their families and their community.

### El Silencio

The adventure takes place in an average village in Colombia, affected by 60 years of armed conflict. Remote and violent, it keeps secrets in every corner. Everyone in the village knows what's going on, but nobody talks about it. Guerillas, drug traffickers, paramilitaries and state forces have left their mark on the community.

### Characters and story arcs

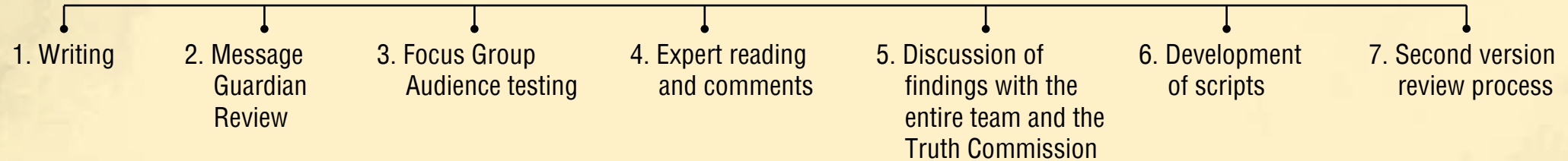
In El Silencio, as in many places in Colombia, a demobilised guerrilla, a social leader, an active paramilitary, the sister of a disappeared person, displaced families, narcotraffickers and people from diverse ethnic minorities all co-exist. The arcs of change of these characters and the young protagonists of the story highlight the importance of truth, listening, empathy and the conviction that it is possible to deal with disagreements without resorting to violence and stigmatizing others.



## How the scripts were revised and the universe and characters refined

Each detail in the story was carefully reviewed to avoid unintended messages and to achieve engagement, relevance and clarity. The Message Guardian's knowledge on the subject was very important to ensure the credibility of the story and characters.

### The process permanently accompanied by the Message Guardian



### Series and Scripts' duration

The project initially included a series of five episodes of 25mins each. After the development phase and the pre-testing results, it was agreed to extend to seven episodes and the original scripts were extended to 30 minutes in length. However, the complexity of the themes and message brief pillars led to the decision to extend them to 45 minutes. This resulted in changes in the structure of the story and the inclusion of new characters, which meant additional writing time, new revisions and pre-testing with the audience and donors.



## South African Case Study

“Heartlines was looking for a story that would show when two people from very different backgrounds, get to know each other a bit better and listen to each other’s stories and how by doing that it really leads to greater understanding and in the long run trust.”

- Jennifer Charlton, Executive Producer Heartlines

### A stroke of luck: Beyond the River

The initial concept that was developed was an action-packed film that would feature high-profile South African comedian Trevor Noah. Unfortunately the project fell through and Heartlines had to explore other stories and concepts that would initiate conversations on race, identity and reconciliation.

Although this was a major set-back, this is not unusual. Not all concepts and approaches will come to fruition. When a concept falls through the project team may need to return to the drawing board to develop a new concept.

Developing a storyline was one of the most challenging aspects of the project. The messages that needed to be shared with the audience were broad which was a blessing and a curse for the creative team. A lot of time was spent thinking about a story that would capture the messages authentically but that was engaging and compelling.

“Heartlines was looking for a story that would show when two people from very different backgrounds, get to know each other a bit better and listen to each other’s stories and how by doing that it really leads to greater understanding and in the long run trust. We’d raised the money for a film that would be part of a campaign around this whole idea and it fell through.” Explains Jennifer Charlton Heartlines Executive Producer.

It was only when Craig Freimond (writer and director) and Robbie Thorpe (writer and producer) stumbled upon the story of Piers Cruickshanks and Siseko Ntondini that Beyond a River was born. After hearing Piers and Siseko’s remarkable true story, Craig knew that they had found what they had been looking for.



### The Story of Beyond the River

Craig Freimond  
Director and writer



Siseko Ntondini (al frente) y Piers Cruickshanks (detrás) inspiraron Beyond the River.



“The film had a very strange genesis because my producer Robbie, got a call from these canoeists, who had this story about an older white guy and younger black guy from very different circumstances who teamed up to do the Dusi (a gruelling canoeing race in South Africa) and had a pretty unusual and amazing experience. What was essentially Piers and Siseko’s story needed more drama and more character drama, so we took both of those characters and moved quite far from Piers and Siseko,” explains Craig.

It had all the elements they were looking for. In essence it was a story about two men, one black and one white, who come from vastly different backgrounds, who shared a vision of winning gold in one of the most challenging sports competitions in the world.



*Duma and Zama flee from the police in the film Beyond the River.*



*Duma played by Lemogang Tsipa outside his shack in the film.*



“ I’m fascinated to see a film like this, which is quite different actually. I can’t think of too many films like it. It’s got a feel-good aspect to it but it’s also got a lot of depth. People will enjoy it, just from the screenings we’ve done so far people are very moved by the story and are responding to the film itself, the actors, the landscape. It’s definitely not a film about canoeing. It’s a film about two people and their lives,”

- Craig Freimond, Writer and Director.

Heartlines chose to use the feature film, *Beyond the River*, as the anchor for the Edutainment strategy. Previous films dealing with race had tended to be either slapstick comedies or very heavy dramas which had been very poorly attended in the cinemas. This film was innovative in that it used a light touch but combined this with a serious message around race and values.

“It worked really well as a story. The initial story was pretty inspiring and with a little bit more dramatic character work, we took both characters as far as we could take them. All of those ingredients added up to a really powerful story. We battled to categorise it. In some ways it’s a sports movie but it’s not really a sports movie it’s a drama that happens to feature the sport of canoeing. But really it’s about a friendship between these two guys and their struggles of trying to get to know each other,” says Craig.

It was also a story that centred around a sport and South Africans love sport. As a nation, sport has been a catalyst for healing and reconciliation in the past. In 1995 the Springboks won the Rugby World Cup and it was a moment that brought people together in a way that wasn’t thought possible at the time. This story built on this narrative and distilled the idea of national reconciliation at an individual level.



**The people who inspired this story**  
**Going Beyond the River**



Siseko Ntondini



Grant Swanby



Actor Grant Swanby who played Steve stands with Piers Cruickshank (right) the inspiration for Steve’s character.



**Going Beyond the River**  
**The documentary**

## **Finessing a true story**

After identifying the story that would be the centre piece of the campaign, the writers began the hard task of developing this inspiring true story into a remarkable script. During this process the writers developed fictional stories for each character, showing their personal traumas and difficulties that would allow audiences to identify with them.

## **The story of Beyond the River**

Inspired by the true story of Siseko Ntondini and Piers Cruickshanks, who came 7th in the 2014 Dusi Canoe Marathon, Beyond the River tells the story of Steve, a seasoned white canoeist intent on winning a 10th gold medal and Duma, a young black man who avoids drifting into a life of crime by taking up paddling. The duo team up with the aim of winning gold but struggle to find their rhythm. Only by understanding their pasts, the traumas and realities of each other's lives are they able to connect and perform as a team. Despite several setbacks Duma and Steve dig deep and eventually win gold.

## **The characters**

Duma (played by Lemogang Tsipa) is a young black man, living in a shack in Soweto who is drifting into a life of crime in order to help support his family. Duma is encouraged to take up canoeing again after dropping out following the death of his mother, by Oupa (played by Israel Makoe) a reformed gangster who founded the Soweto Canoe Club, a youth development initiative.

Steve (played by Grant Swanby) is a middle-aged white man living in the suburbs of Johannesburg. Steve is battling a personal loss and the breakdown of his marriage to Annie (played by Emily Child) and yearns for a 10th gold medal at the Dusi. He is encouraged to take Duma under his wing by Dan (played by Garth Breytenbach) the Soweto Canoe Club co-founder.



*Craig Freimond  
Writer and Director*

## Lessons learned

### Step 4: The story is the message



- Make sure the creative team knows and understands the objectives of the strategy and the results of the formative research.
- Work with scriptwriters who specialize in specific formats and audiences.
- Integrate messages into the story itself.
- Try to model the desired behavior or values through the characters and their narrative arcs. The actions of a character whom the audience has learned to love and trust are far more effective than a hundred speeches.
- Create loveable characters who are empowering and make a difference in their own lives and in the lives of their community.
- Characters should speak and act naturally and not "recite" messages.
- The audience should relate to the characters and the choices they face. They should see the story as relevant to their own lives.
- Instead of simply talking about people rallying around an issue, show how they do it.
- Make sure there are no hidden or unintended messages.
- Beware of messages which contradict each other across different platforms.
- Make sure the story is culturally credible, relevant and authentic.
- Give your audience a sense of agency, hope and possibility.
- Make sure there is a balance between educational and entertaining.



## Step 5

# Designing a Multimedia Strategy

“ One of the things we've bumped up against is the young people. We have to understand this notion of 'never, ever again'. It's something that, as South Africans, we have to ask ourselves. What do we have to put in place as a society to make sure that these things don't happen again? ”

- Yasmin Sooka - Truth and Reconciliation Commission, South Africa

### The EE Route

1 - Key decisions

2 - Formative research

3 - From research to message

4 - The story is the message

● **5 - Designing a multimedia strategy**

● 6 - Pre-testing

● 7 - Production

● 8 - Promotion

● 9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

**Chapter overview:** this chapter looks at how to select your media formats. It explains the advantages of the multimedia approach to extend the reach and impact of your education entertainment campaign into other media channels.



## Developing an integrated communications strategy

Edutainment has often been used as part of a wider communication Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) campaign, a catalyst for social action. If you are thinking of a wider campaign, with your Edutainment at the centre, you need to plan the broader strategy very carefully. A well-planned communication strategy can enable you to take advantage of a range of opportunities that Edutainment presents. For example, you can use your brand name to popularise school materials.

Meaningful change requires creating an enabling environment, strengthening services, building personal and community skills and agency. You may want to support and advocate for better public policies. Think about how the different campaign elements can be used to bring about real, measurable social change for individuals and the communities in which they live. When you plan your communication strategy consider the different partnerships and the benefits that they bring. Remember, partnerships can build a critical mass and increase the volume, reach and consistency of your campaign. Partnerships can also create a supportive environment for change.

There are three components to a social and behaviour change communication strategy:

- **Media:** TV, radio, print, digital and social media, out of home
- **Advocacy:** tackling policy to enable individual and social change
- **Social mobilisation:** engaging with communities to support actions for change



## Strategic planning workshop

A strategic planning workshop can be a good idea. Gather your team. With the final objective in mind, analyse the evidence and define in detail the components of the strategy. It's not necessarily about having many components; it's more about each component making a meaningful contribution to achieving the objective and acting in synergy with the others.

For example, if your television series promotes non-violent conflict resolution an additional component could be a handout explaining mediation techniques.

It is paramount that all complementary components and strategies are truly integrated and don't appear or feel like independent and disconnected strategies. In this sense, the development of a brand can be very useful. The strategic planning workshop should end with consensus on the components, why and for what purpose they are produced and how they will be used to achieve the strategy's objective. It is very helpful to draw up an outline.

### Ideas for optimising reach and impact

It is really important to tie your campaign elements (media, advocacy, social mobilisation) together under a strong brand name. A popular and strong brand gives a focus to the campaign. It will generate interest and excitement and give popularity to other initiatives with the same objectives. The brand includes graphic elements (a logo and a graphic style) and textual elements (for example, the slogan or tagline) that should be maintained in all the communication elements and can have a unifying effect. You may want to consider developing a hashtag to accompany your campaign, hashtags help to bring online communities together, extend the reach of digital campaigns, encourage engagement and help to build brand advocates. In addition using a hashtag makes it easy to report on the reach of your campaign using digital analytics tools.



- **Single medium or multimedia**

Depending on your circumstances, your resources and the nature of the social issues you are addressing, you may use a single medium or a combination of media for your Edutainment.

- **Using one medium only**

Using one medium only, whether radio, music, theatre or any other medium, can be effective. It is relatively simple to manage. The disadvantage, however, is that your product must stand alone. It loses the potential reinforcement that other media can bring to it.

- **Using a multimedia approach**

The advantage to using a combination of media at the same time is that different media have different characteristics, which can complement one another and increase the impact of your campaign.

- Use a combination of radio and print. Radio has the potential to reach massive audiences and can communicate broad messages. The print materials can complement this by conveying more detailed information, which can be kept by key readers and used for reference.
- The credibility and popularity of one medium can lend credibility and popularity to another medium. For example, your TV show can drive people to your print or to your social media platforms where the debate and dialogue continue.

Different media can also help you reach both your primary and secondary target audiences more effectively. For example, if the aim of your Edutainment is to address gender-based violence national television will reach the urban politicians responsible for policy. Regional radio programmes (in appropriate languages) will reach the victims and perpetrators in communities.

Using media in combination is often more powerful than using a single medium. This approach requires fairly complex project management and co-ordination. But the benefits are worth the effort. Just as advertisers use radio, television and print to increase the impact of their advertisements, having more than one source of information adds credibility to your Edutainment message.



## Formats

The basic principle of Edutainment is to educate and entertain, to use popular entertainment formats to tackle social issues in a bold and entertaining way. To achieve this, you need to select media formats that will best reach your target audience and appeal to them. Mass media in particular has the power to reach large numbers of people, to contribute to development and give a voice to marginalised communities. Mass media is central to human rights and to shaping and shifting public opinion and behaviour.

The quality of Edutainment programmes depends on the development process and the theory used. Should you use a TV reality show or a drama, a film or a play? Maybe a booklet and an online campaign would be best, or a combination of all of these things. Is it a national or local issue you are dealing with? For instance, you would not use national radio to tackle the issue of polluted water sources in a small area.

To make the decision, you need to research the media formats in your country or community and find out which ones your target audience prefer and which are best suited to your goals.

### You need to consider:

**What are the most popular media that people use for entertainment?**

**Which community media can we partner with to strengthen the campaign?**

**Which media best reach your target audience?**

**What formats do people watch or listen to?**

**How does the medium suit your goals?**

**Can you combine media for maximum effect?**

**The scale of your project - is it national or local?**

**What funds are available?**

**Can the media reach very large groups of people?**

**Are the media credible sources of information?**



To find information on audience reach, look at national surveys or audience ratings (ARs) from your public broadcaster. These may or may not be available in your country. Ask members of your research groups what media channels they have accessed. Find out which media are available to your target audience, and which ones are popular. Here is some information on the Edutainment opportunities in the most commonly used media.

- **Television:** is a very effective media for Edutainment. To reach maximum audiences you must compete in prime-time and be as good, if not better, than the best local entertainment programmes at the time. However, today with digital and online streaming on demand, it is harder to gauge audience ratings.

Edutainment is not drama with a message tagged on at the end. Rather, through a rigorous research process, the complexities of change are integrated into the fabric of the drama itself. Personal and social change is complex and difficult. Stories are a great way to show the complexity of both individual and social change. Drama can model individual and social change through the journey of characters facing difficult choices within themselves and in their community or broader social environment.

Good drama moves people emotionally. Using characters that audiences identify with can stimulate dialogue and debate, create empathy, encourage people to think about the choices that they face, challenge social norms and values, and stimulate action.

People often watch television with family and friends (co-viewing) which provides an immediate opportunity for viewers to engage with other people. Dialogue and debate is one of the important stages in changing behaviour.

Television has its disadvantages too. Firstly, it is relatively expensive to produce, though cost per person reached is not high. Secondly, television drama is not a good medium for carrying detailed content messages.



- **Characters as advocates:** you can also use actors as advocates for your messages. Everyone loves celebrities. They can draw people into your cause and create a buzz around your message.
- **Radio:** is an excellent medium for Edutainment. It has a wide reach in most countries and can be accessed anywhere or anytime. Community radio is effective in targeting local issues and providing a forum for local debates and concerns. Most developing countries have reasonably well-developed radio networks which are more accessible to communities than other mass media.

As with TV, radio is important for reaching low-literacy communities as well. Radio production costs are relatively low in comparison to television. Talk radio is an excellent vehicle for interactive debate and discussion. In terms of story, the visual element of television does make it more powerful. So make sure you use experienced and creative writers to develop your radio dramas.
- **Video learning tools:** you can produce shorter versions (cut-downs) of your television and radio dramas and combine them with print materials and facilitation notes. These can be powerful learning tools which last over time and are great formats for facilitating discussion and debate in community groups and dialogues. It is also a way to reversion programmes you have already made.
- **Film:** everyone loves a good film! Film is a popular format. Films can be made for film distribution in cinemas, online or for television. They can also be packaged as a DVD set to be used in clinics, schools and community dialogues. Films can also be put on YouTube for wider distribution and use. They are self-contained and can be stopped and started if necessary in group discussions. However, films can be expensive to produce and require skilled producers to make them.
- **Print media:** includes newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, comic strips, comic books, short story books, booklets and posters amongst others. Print is an excellent resource for providing information that your audience may want to check and refer to more than once. It is also good for providing contacts to link people to services and help. Printed materials can be read alone or in a group, with or without a facilitator. They can also be kept for reference. Print media is particularly effective in combination with broadcast media or performance.



Successful print material for Edutainment must also be entertaining and accessible. Edutainment print:

- Can use story to bring the content alive and generate interest.
  - Must be written at the right language level and in the right language for your target audience.
  - Be designed in a way that makes it both readable and interesting.
  - Can be made interactive with fun and engaging activities and exercises.
- **Comics:** can be an effective format for print medium Edutainment, as the combination of words and images is especially helpful for people with low literacy levels. However, if you are planning to use comics, do some research among your target audience. Comics may not be well known or accepted if people do not come from a culture that is used to reading comics. Adults may think that comics are for children.
  - **Photo novellas (photo stories):** are often more appealing than comics because of the use of photographs. People relate to the characters and environments more closely because the photographs depict situations in a more lifelike manner. The photo novella offers the possibility of using well-known, popular characters. The major disadvantage of photo novellas is that they are relatively expensive to produce.
  - **Live performances (plays, dance, puppet shows):** have been used throughout the world to entertain and teach. They take place in formal theatres, community halls, under trees, in classrooms or on the street. Live Theatre can be both immediate and intimate. It can also be interactive, with responses from the audience forming part of the story as it unfolds. Like television it offers opportunities for discussion and debate among the audience. It is a good medium to reach groups with low literacy. A disadvantage of live performances is that they reach relatively small groups of people at a time and cannot easily be repackaged into another format for long-term use.
  - **Game shows and gaming:** through game shows or quizzes on television and radio, phones, computers or in community halls with a live audience, educational messages can be effectively integrated into questions and answers.

This approach can stimulate the audience to think and learn. It can challenge myths and is fun. It is possible to combine a drama and a game show by presenting a short drama followed by questions or a quiz relating to the messages.

- **Music and dance:** are popular in many cultures, and used for teaching and learning. You can ask popular singers to compose and record a song with a message. Make sure that the performers are appropriate for the message. For example, it would be inappropriate to get a popular singer to perform a song about alcohol abuse if he or she is well known for going on drunken binges!
- **Talk shows or chat shows:** particularly on radio, are a good forum for debate. They offer an opportunity to respond directly to the issues that your research has told you concern your audience. It can be a live audience talk show or with invited guests. Either can include experts in the field, stakeholders and ordinary people.
- **Puppet shows:** are very popular in parts of the developing world, and have been successfully used for Edutainment. Puppet shows can be cost-effective, since only a few people are needed to put on a show that has multiple characters. Puppet shows can also be used for teaching and learning on the streets. Puppets can effectively deal with taboo subjects, such as sexual issues, in ways that real actors could not. In order for puppet shows to be successful, they need to be created and produced by skilled people. Also remember that the live puppet shows only reach small numbers of people at a time if they are not televised.



- **Social media:** in today's rapidly changing communication environment, many successful social development campaigns now use social media. This can include Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, SMS and websites. These platforms create spaces where people can meet virtually, talk, debate and engage with action. Social media has become a key tool to promote active citizen participation in democracy, development, openness and accountability. Some people argue that social media is not really Edutainment. It simply provides information. Others believe it is an entertaining space where people meet to talk, share and create and should be included as a new Edutainment format. Social media can enable your organisation to create a conversation and build relationships and it provides opportunities for on-going engagement.

It provides an opportunity for people to:

- Communicate with a community of people who share their interest or concern
- To participate
- Access information

It can extend the dialogue from other platforms and contribute to social learning. It can also break the silence on topics that people otherwise may not want to talk about with their family or friends. Social media also allows for discussions with people from all walks of life. A politician can engage in the same discussion as a worker.

Viral messaging can be very powerful. Viral messaging is when a message, video clip or information is put out on the internet, on a Facebook page, via Twitter, YouTube or blog and catches on. Other people in turn share it and the network of people expands rapidly. This is called "going viral".

When a topic or event is very popular and widely discussed online it is called "trending".

Something to bear in mind with social media. You cannot control the message. Once it goes out it will assume a life of its own. It provides a powerful opportunity for social learning and debate. However, remember the purpose is to create and generate ongoing dialogue and debate.

## Think about complementary strategies



Meaningful change may require creating nurturing environments, strengthening services, developing individual and community skills, and even advocating for changes in public policy. Edutainment is often coupled with other communication strategies that contribute to real and measurable social change for individuals and communities in which they live.

- **Advocacy strategies:** As part of your intervention, you may include an advocacy campaign to tackle structural barriers that impact on the issue you are addressing. Advocacy can also include direct communication through newsletters, media channels and partnerships with influencers including columnists, artists, celebrities and other public figures.

- **Educational strategies:** Another opportunity is to develop educational materials for schools. Educational packages can support a structured learning process, which builds on the popularity of your chosen Edutainment. They can be designed for groups of people or individuals to use, either in a formal educational setting such as a school, or in an informal setting such as a clinic waiting room. Your Edutainment brand name will draw people to your materials and give it credibility.

- **Social mobilisation strategies:** Social mobilisation involves engaging with communities to support actions for change. It can include mass 'town hall' meetings, community dialogues, events, activations and even public marches. Dialogues allow people to express their views and seek solutions to their own local problems. You can also use characters from your stories to spark conversation and get people to talk about their

own lives. Community dialogues can involve local stakeholders such as NGOs, CSOs, local leaders, the church, community organisations, or government services. Learning tools can be produced to support community mobilisation efforts and can include DVD learning tools using suitable clips from TV/film and packaged with a set of discussion questions. Mobilisation also refers to partnerships with local or community media, or with existing networks, groups and alliances that can be established to enhance outreach and participation.

- **Knowledge management strategies:** create practical communities of practice and keep them united and sharing knowledge relevant to the strategy. They can be very useful to increase the reach of the strategy, reach other target audiences and strengthen alliances.

- **Digital strategies:** take advantage of the popularity, reach and low costs of online media. There is a tremendous number of alternatives within the digital environment. From the dissemination of content or the forwarding of relevant content produced by others, to informative activities, mobilisation, support for causes, public endorsement coverage of events or live broadcasts, and much more.



## Define the concept and brand

Another major step of the planning process is the definition of the concept and brand. You may require some advice from advertising professionals for this task, but involve the strategy team, who are familiar with the objectives, of your Edutainment campaign.

The concept is developed into a brand, The brand is composed of a few elements: a logo, a slogan or tagline, a graphic guide (typography, colors, imagery and a brand CI (terminology, tone, type of language). Sometimes, sound elements are also part of a brand. For example, the jingle or song from the film.

The brand design will require a copywriter who chooses the appropriate words and writes the texts in an attractive, easy-to-remember way. A graphic designer then turns this into a unique graphic design that integrates all the elements and media together.

Different elements, for example a video and a cartoon, are identified as part of the same strategy thanks to the brand. Pay attention to this aspect and dedicate the necessary time to it.

Finally, it is very important that the brand is tested with partners and stakeholders.



# Colombian Case Study



Components



Trailer The Silence  
TV Series

## Components

Keeping in mind the ways people consume media today, we decided to rely on a transmedia strategy, where the narratives of the different media complement one another. And simultaneously to expand the impact of Edutainment through complementary strategies: social mobilisation, education and knowledge management.

## Edutainment

- **The Silence, a thriller series**

The series highlights the power of stories to model behaviors and social change. Seven episodes for national broadcast, will engage and stir up debate and discussion among family audiences. Following the adventures of a group of teens, peering through windows into the largely unknown world of armed conflict and deeply affected lives, the series promotes tolerance and empathy. It helps to understand the past and the values and aspirations of the different protagonists of the war. It has the capacity to stimulate dialogue and debate, promote historical thinking and break the intergenerational silence.

There are 18 main characters – a chorus of five teenagers, two young people and eleven adults. The cast vividly reflect the reality of a Colombian people immersed in the dynamics of war and everyday conflicts.



**Diego Mejía**  
The Silence  
TV Series Director

“The idea is that each character shares stories about their lives... some about their past, who they are, and others tell us what they are going through. This way the audience realizes we have a diverse variety of citizens in that town.”

- Diego Mejía. The Silence TV Series Director

The decision to choose a television series as the main component of the strategy was based on the universal access to broadcast television in Colombia. Television series are very popular including fiction, soaps and drama formats. There is also a strong production capacity in the media and film industries. Even though digital and cable platforms capture a good portion of media consumption in the country, broadcast television has high reach and popularity, especially in rural areas and small municipalities, where the armed conflict had its greatest impact. The Covid-19 pandemic also confirmed the importance and relevance of television in Colombia.

The series is intended to be broadcast first on a national commercial channel, then on-demand platforms, on national public TV and the regional channels and finally, local community media. It will be available online on the strategy’s website.

• **Monologues and video profiles**

The multiple perspectives and attitudes of the armed conflict’s protagonists, are captured through realistic short format fiction narratives. From the landowner who is a collaborator of the paramilitary groups to the demobilised former guerrilla soldier, these fiction shorts provide an insight into their lives and visions

These pieces, 30 in total, will be used as extended narratives to trigger dialogue in social mobilisation activities, through social media, on the web and in outreach and schools programmes. They will also be used to promote the television series.



**Natalia**  
Character  
The Silence  
TV Series



**Camocho**  
Character  
The Silence  
TV Series





## Education

### • Resources Kit for Schools

One of the needs expressed repeatedly by teachers during the formative research stage was to open spaces for dialogue where the schools community, students, teachers and parents, could address the issue of the armed conflict without prejudice or being stigmatized. They also needed resources to facilitate this work. So a resource toolkit was developed in downloadable PDF format, which uses the strategy's communication contents and products as well as other complementary resources. Its primary use is for educational institutions (grades 8 and 9) but it is relevant in other institutions and foms including universitieis youth collectives, community organisations and technical education institutions.

The distinctive feature of this resource kit is its methodology, focused on Edutainment and the promotion of critical historical thinking. This involves presenting contrasting narratives, resources, information and data for evidence-based decision making. It has an organic link with the fiction series, which the students must watch, comment on and understand in order to have informed dialogues on three themes:

- 1. Conflict resolution** focused on female leadership and persecution; racism and discrimination against indigenous communities; women leaders of the Unión Patriótica (UP).<sup>1</sup>
- 2. Truth and historical understanding of the armed conflict** (kidnapping; forced disappearance; child recruitment).<sup>2</sup>
- 3. Justice and reparation of victims.** How justice for reparation operates; other types of justice; listening as a mechanism of reparation.

<sup>1</sup> *The UP is a leftist political party created by the FARC-EP guerrilla movement in the late 80's, as a result of the first peace agreement led by President Betancur (1982-86). The UP members were victims of violence and extermination by extreme right forces and paramilitaries. It is one of the priority cases (Macrocaso # 06) of the transitional court of justice JEP (Justicia Especial para la Paz).*

<sup>2</sup> *Macrocasos # 01 and # 07 of the transitional court of justice JEP (Justicia Especial para la Paz).*



**Resources Kit**

**Vladimir Melo**

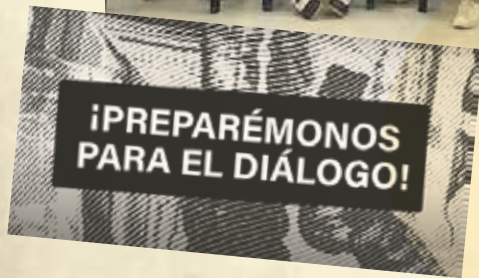
Message Guardian  
Breaking the Silence

**The resources kit includes a field diary or students' workbook (4 booklets), a teacher's guide, a personal diary and a timeline, as well as Romper el Silencio's contents.**



“ I feel that it will be very important; the content and activities that we’ve come up with, such as the *Week to Break the Silence*, will allow us to trigger dialogue...

- Tatiana Vila, *Breaking the Silence*  
Producer



## Social mobilization

The focus of social mobilisation is the schools’ buy-in and ownership of the strategy, and its main activity, is the ‘Week to Break the Silence’ approach.

Teachers from all over the country are invited to a free training course to strengthen their skills in Edutainment and dialogue in crisis contexts. The expected end result is that teachers organise, with the participation of students, fellow teachers and parents, a “Week to Break the Silence” in their educational institutions, using the Toolkit and the contents of the strategy to design their own activities. It could be a film forum, a fair, a screening in a public space, a round table discussion, a testimony, a conference with a local expert or a mural. The possibilities are endless.

The best designs for the “Week to Break the Silence” are selected for a public award, which will include resources to expand the mobilisation activities either in the educational institution or beyond, for example, in the municipality.

The strategy has a significant number of resources to promote social mobilization.

- **Documentary series**

In-depth and insightful analysis of the armed conflict in Colombia, using a mixed narrative documentary style. Although this format is not largely consumed by teenagers and youth, it was pretested very successfully and easily reached parents and teachers. The goal is to amplify the voice of those who have directly experienced the conflict and to challenge those who are indifferent to it.



The objective of these documentaries is the understanding of what really happened. This component extends the boundaries of traditional Edutainment, which tends to focus on drama and emotional engagement. It relies on factual storytelling, using data, archives and personal testimonies to break the silence.

The documentary tackles questions like, how did this situation come about? What actually happened? Why didn't Colombia react? The documentary series unpacks the history of the armed conflict in Colombia; to get to know those who have fought the war and those who have suffered as a result. It seeks to unravel the origins of the conflict and its consequences and to know the paths that have been opened during the transition to peace.



Trailer Breaking the Silence  
documentary series

Three documentaries of 30 minutes each and 15 shorts – personal testimonies and experts' opinions - contribute to break the silence on the root causes of the armed conflict. The different films include:



- **State:** the illegal armed groups have left millions of victims in Colombia. But not only them, so too has the State. This film unveils the causes and consequences of this violence.
- **Insurgencies:** during the 1960s, the main guerrilla groups emerged in Colombia. The armed struggle became the path of many men and women. This film explores the origins of the insurgencies, their causes and consequences.
- **Paramilitarism:** in the counterinsurgency warfare, other illegal armed actors emerged: the paramilitaries, who shared the same objectives with the State and its Armed Forces. This film delves into the phenomenon of paramilitarism in Colombia, one of the most nefarious/despicable chapters in its history.



Diversas voces,  
músicas  
y territorios

La música como vehículo  
para contar las  
realidades de los  
territorios y abrir  
espacios de diálogo en  
torno al conflicto y la  
paz.

- **Podcast series**

Resistance, resilience and memory. This series of six podcasts navigates the history of the armed conflict through the voices and musical expressions that have emerged in different communities and regions to break the silence imposed by the war. The 45-minute episodes use a narrative journalism format which includes dialogue with experts and musicians and features a range of popular music. A well-known hostess threads the narrative and adds relevant information. They are aimed at young people, teachers and parents.

### **Episode 1: Rhythms of resistance, music and armed conflict**

An introductory chapter tells us why we should talk about conflict and music, and introduces the characters and locations of the series

### **Episode 2: The new age of rap**

The story of New Saga and Dementes Conscientes and forced recruitment in Chocó, a province in the pacific coast of Colombia

### **Episode 3: Bullenrap, resistance and freedom**

Bullerengue and rap merge to recover the lost dialogue between grandparents and young people in the municipality of Libertad, province of Sucre, caribbean region of Colombia

### **Episode 4: The verses that travel across the lowlands, Joropo and coplas.**

Elda Flórez and the history of struggle and resistance in the Llanos Orientales (Eastern Plains) inherited from Guadalupe Salcedo's liberal guerrillas in the late 50's.

### **Episode 5: Where are they?**

Tambora. Women sing about the forced disappearance of their children in Aguachica, Cesar, in the caribbean lowlands.

### **Episode 6: Sound Antimilitarism**

Punk. Antimilitarism music confronts urban violence in Medellín, second largest city in Colombia and capital of Antioquia, one of the provinces most affected by the armed conflict.

### **Episode 7: The Coca Growing Copla**

The colonization of the bush and the cultivation of illicit crops in El Guaviare.



**Trailer for Breaking the Silence Podcast series**



**PSAs trailer**  
**Breaking the Silence**



- **Radio shows and PSAs**

Radio is the medium with the greatest reach and dissemination throughout the country, with an audience reach of 99.1% of the national population and more than 1 500 radio stations. Therefore, radio is the ideal medium for triggering dialogue and participation in communities using locally produced content. The strategy uses two radio formats: Public Service Announcements with the fictional characters, to extend the messages and reach and promote the television series and radio talk shows to promote local dialogue.

- **Mobilisation guide**

This guide offers a route to open up dialogues about conflict, truth, justice, reparation and the non-repetition of violent conflict. The different components of the strategy are used, including the toolkit, documentaries, podcasts, profiles and monologues and radio spots. The approach takes an historical perspective, and promotes critical thinking and can be used in formal and informal educational settings.

- **Online platform**

This is a content hub, where everything can be downloaded free of charge. This web space contains all the pieces of the strategy and is the meeting point for a community of practice, including teachers, schools, parents, social organizations and youth collectives. It is for all people and organisations who are working to prevent the resurgence of the armed conflict. Our partnership with The Communication Initiative guarantees that the web space will have state-of-the-art technology, high traffic and permanence. The objective of this component is to provide a dynamic space, with long-term access to all the strategy's contents and related knowledge and networks.



“ Here you had to become blind, deaf and dumb, you didn't see, you didn't hear, you didn't speak, because if you made the mistake of speaking, you were dead, no matter who you were, you died. As long as you spoke, you were dead. So, we had to put up with all that.”

- Final Report. Truth Commission. Colombia. 2022.

## Knowledge management

The knowledge management process aims to connect and position Break the Silence's themes and issues on the agenda of social organisations and decision makers. The Communication Initiative Latin America (CI LA) will provide the network, the platform and the knowledge sharing mechanisms. CI LA's flagship e-magazine Son de Tambora, with a recognised brand and more than 40 000 subscribers in Latin America) will be a central distribution vehicle. Approximately 15 000 of them are in Colombia.

**Son de Tambora 347 - The power of stories to transform**

**Son de Tambora 346 - On the occasion of the delivery of the Final Report of the Truth Commission in Colombia**

**Son de Tambora 344 - Building peace through the participation of communities**

## The concept

A key step in the design of the strategy was conceptualisation. The participatory exercise was led by the core team with Punto Aparte, an editorial and graphic design company, with years of publishing experience on complex issues for the general audience. Reflection started with the problem already identified, the multiple effects of the armed conflict on Colombian society:

*“An anesthetic effect on social sectors that haven't been directly impacted by violence, who became numb to the pain of others; an effect that normalises violence so its exercise is accepted as “natural”; a polarising effect: the public debate between punitive justice vs transitional justice as a way out of addressing and resolving the armed conflict has triggered opposite perspectives, which are stigmatised by both sides. This is permeating all spheres of the social, political, and electoral agenda.*

*All of these effects have produced a kind of “social silence” regarding what happened during the armed conflict across large sections of Colombian society. To construct peace it is necessary to have a permanent dialogue about what happened. It is necessary to break the silence and reflect about the truth of the war.”*  
(Vladimir Melo, Message Guardian)



In this way, each component of the strategy provides **spaces for deliberation and dialogue** and generates informed debate to help **BREAKING THE SILENCE**:



- **The silence of the victims:** who have not been able to tell their stories or make their claims to those responsible.
- **The silence of those who live in fear:** many people are afraid to express themselves outside their limited comfort zones.
- **The silence of those who have not acknowledged their responsibilities:** people on all sides who have yet to state the facts, acknowledge their responsibilities as perpetrators, and provide reparations to the victims.
  - **The silence of the indifferent:** those who do not speak out because they think the conflict has nothing to do with them.
  - **The silence of the "misinformers":** those who polarise, distort, tell half-truths, and take facts out of context.
  - **The silence of power:** local, regional, and national political debates and decisions tend to be dominated by people who already wield considerable power and influence.
  - **The silence of those discriminated against:** women, non-heteronormative identities, children and youth, afro and indigenous communities, and non-dominant political players which have been historically excluded from deliberations.
- **The silence of youth:** whose words and perspectives fall on deaf ears.



This conceptual approach, thoroughly developed during two years of work, coincides with the Truth Commission's Final Report's recommendations and is aligned with several of its statements. This project and the Truth Commission coincide in advocating for:

- Embracing the victims' experiences, their recognition and the strengthening and promotion of dialogue spaces that allow them to share their stories. According to the Truth Commission, "the pain and trauma suffered individually and collectively need these processes: spaces for listening, recognition and support."
- Truth as a path to healing.
- Inclusion of historically excluded groups.
- A greater understanding of the history of the conflict and the construction of its memory.
- An increase in citizen participation.
- Education to strengthen historical thinking with a critical approach and capacities for peaceful conflict resolution.

### The brand

Based on the reflections outlined in formative research chapters, the name **Romper el Silencio (Breaking the Silence)** was chosen for the strategy. Romper el Silencio is a challenging invitation in a country like Colombia. But it is also a desire, even a demand, expressed by many people during the formative research stage.



## Breaking the silence for what?

One of the most heartfelt wishes of many Colombians is to break the cycle of what has already happened to us. Likewise, for the Truth Commission, non-repetition of the violent conflict is a key objective and therefore, is one of the pillars of the Romper el Silencio strategy. After a series of think tank sessions with the creatives and the core team, a slogan was chosen to emphasise this concept:

**BREAKING THE SILENCE  
STORIES SO HISTORY IS NOT REPEATED**

**ROMPER**  
**EL SILENCIO**  
HISTORIAS PARA NO REPETIR LA HISTORIA

## Logotype

With a very simple but striking style, the typographic logo incorporates a distinctive element: sound waves that literally break the word silence, in a very powerful symbolism.

This symbolism is visual, audio and visual visual and invites audiences to break the silence, not violently, but through communication: sounds, music, images, etc. Thus, it alludes to the different formats and pedagogical components of the strategy.

A typeface was chosen that is easy to read in print and on screens and is highly versatile. Its condensed version, for example, makes it possible to build a very solid block of text in the logo.

The main colors are forest green, night black and peace white. The green, neutral and very present in the Colombian territory, tones down and calms a word as strong as "Romper". The suggested palette also incorporates other colors to differentiate the different communication pieces.



Television Series for Breaking the Silence with family



The documentary pieces incorporate archive footage, photographs, animations, testimonies and original interviews.

### The treatment of the image

The Punto Aparte and documentary teams chose an illustration style which is contemporary, urban and popular, based on murals and graffiti. This responds to the need to connect with young people, the main target audience. In addition, this allows us to capture parts of the live-action series without suggesting that it is an animated series and can be photocopied in its printed version. It also works in grays and high contrast, an important consideration given that many people will be able to access the materials in this medium.

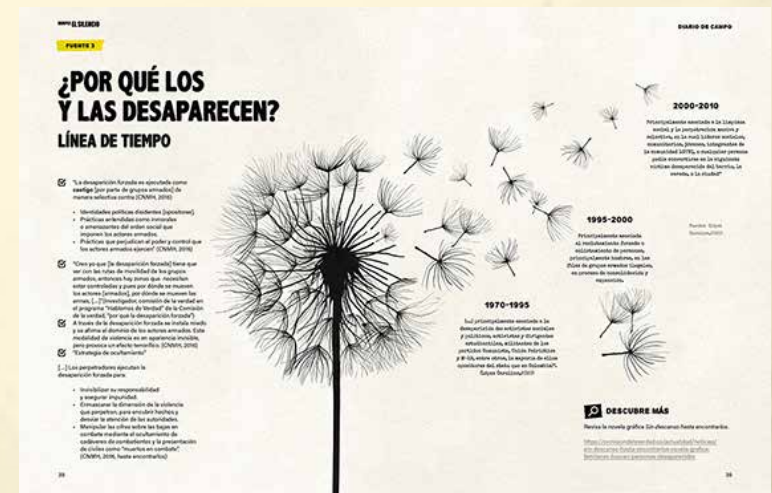


Comics. Resources kit for Breaking the Silence in the classroom

Timeline and comics. School Resources Kit for Breaking the Silence in classroom.



Animations. Documentary series for Breaking the Silence with knowledge





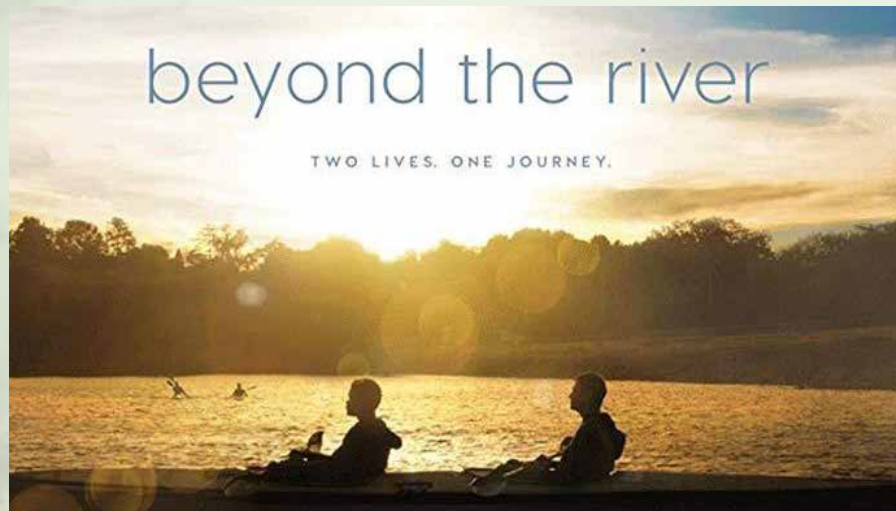
## South African Case Study

“As a teacher I love story-sharing. It helps you connect with your learners, get to know them better. It helps you understand why they behave the way they do.”

- Oarabile Moloiwane, *What's Your Story?*, Teacher



[Trailer Beyond the River](#)



### Components

The cornerstone of the EE strategy was the feature film, which is inspired by a true story. The movie tells a moving story of two men from different backgrounds who meet and team up to compete in South Africa's most grueling marathon canoe race, the Dusi.

The movie was used to drive the campaign at a national level called What's Your Story?. In addition to the movie, the strategy aimed to encourage the sharing of stories by ordinary people through a social mobilization campaign in churches, schools, and workplaces, and a two-day programme that uses storytelling and dialogue as tools to build bridges among key leaders. This was supported by a social media campaign and short format videos.

It was agreed that the campaign would include the following elements:

### Media campaign

Heartlines used a multimedia approach, to reach as wide an audience as possible.

- **Feature Film:** Beyond the River was the anchor for the campaign and launched the campaign nationally.
- **Digital campaign:** Heartlines produced six videos. These videos captured the stories from people living in South Africa who experienced reconciliation as a result of sharing their stories. These videos engaged people in an online discussion about



The Beyond the River Facebook page and profile



Beyond the River on Sky TV



reconciliation through story-telling. Heartlines produced these videos as part of a build-up campaign to get the message and campaign out into the market before the release of the film itself. This was a strategic decision as the film had a lengthy production time.

- **Social media:** the campaign was amplified on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp and the website. It also featured social media influencers and was supported with high quality video content, graphics and other digital assets. In addition to organic content there was a paid social media campaign that included boosting of posts and paid advertising.
- **Radio campaign:** a national campaign that included live reads and was supported by two pre-recorded adverts including a trailer for the film.

### Social mobilisation campaign

To enhance the campaign the social mobilisation intervention used facilitated story-telling sessions that equipped participants with the skills to listen effectively and then get them to tell their own stories. Groups watched the film and then participated in a facilitated discussion. All the resources are available on a website. <https://www.heartlines.org.za/wys/home>

To support the social mobilisation campaigns a series of booklets and guides were developed. These were multimedia resources that aimed to help participants to build relationships both within the session and beyond it. They provided lessons for participants to build a stronger sense of community and connectedness, through discussion groups and sharing in one another's stories.





These sessions used the following five scenes from the film to launch the conversation.

▶ • **Getting to the dam on time**

This montage showed the differences between Duma and Steve getting ready to train at Emmarentia Dam first thing in the morning. Steve gets up, has a shower in his en-suite bathroom, gets in his car and drives to the Dam. Duma has to wash himself at the standpipe outside his shack, take two different taxis, then runs a kilometre from where the taxi drops him.

“STEVE: Listen Duma, if we’re going to do this there are a couple of things you need to know about me. I’m a pain in the ass about certain things. If we say six then it’s six. I don’t do African time. If you need to leave earlier, then leave earlier but make sure you get here on time, OK?”

This montage was a useful starting point for discussions around how well people know and understand other people’s context. It also touched on how privilege impacts on people’s lives.

▶ • **Language barriers**

In this scene Duma shares with Steve the problems he has with speaking and listening in English, which is not his first language. This scene was used to prompt discussions around language and how language creates barriers in South African society.

DUMA: “If Zulu was your second language and I spoke slowly... it would be easier, but if I spoke fast... it would be hard for you.”

Steve looks at him deadpan.

STEVE: “So I should speak slower?”



▶ • **Do you know my story?**

"DUMA: You like pretending that you know me, but you don't...

STEVE: And you think you know me?

DUMA: I know you are Mr. Steve Andrews and you are a teacher and I know you have a wife called Annie and I know where you live and I know what kind of car you drive.

STEVE: Just because you know these things about me doesn't mean you know me."

In this clip Duma challenges Steve regarding the fact that they really do not know each other's stories. In the social mobilisation sessions participants were asked to reflect on some of the things that prevent them from getting to know their friends, colleagues and peers better? And what practical things they could do to find out more about the different people in their lives.



▶ • **Ask. Listen. Tell**

In the film, Steve visits Duma at his home and learns a lot more about his life. This then opens the door for Steve to tell Duma about what happened to his son - the first time he had ever opened up about it. Personal storytelling can be very powerful in understanding where people are coming from.

This scene demonstrates the "Ask. Listen. Tell" approach to story-telling. It was a powerful entry point to equip participants with the critical listening and story-telling skills required when using story-telling for reconciliation purposes and prompted audiences to go away and get to know the people in their lives.

▶ • **#Gobeyond**

Whilst we saw in the film that there were many people who encouraged Steve and Duma to "get in the same boat", there were others whose attitudes were not as supportive. Geoff, consistently throughout the film came up with racist comments. Steve initially had reservations about partnering with Duma, "I don't want to be baby-sitting some kid from the township," he said. However, later he challenges Geoff's racism.

In this scene we see the casual everyday racism that happens in South African society. This scene was used to put the topic of racism on the table and unpack people's experiences of this and find solutions to address these attitudes.



Learners attend a #WhatsYourStory? session

### #WhatsYourStory? School's Campaign

In 2019 following the success of Beyond the River and the #WhatsYourStory? social mobilisation campaign Heartlines developed a programme to use in schools across South Africa. This campaign aimed to help prepare children for a country that is divided and for a world that is rapidly changing. WYS School's Campaign aimed to build empathy skills among school children, to enable them to breakdown past prejudice and mistrust. The programme was built on the premise that empathy teaches adaptability and that the skills of listening, team work, empathy and understanding, are important skills for learners to thrive in the 21st century.

Story-telling was chosen as a method of engagement as stories, help people understand, connect and heal division. The programme was based on the premise of Beyond the River that stories can reconcile a nation. The programme was developed using extensive research and in collaboration with partner schools and the University of Witwatersrand's School of Education

The clips used in the #WhatsYourStory? campaign were used in the school's campaign and additional ones developed. Participants attended workshops that encouraged them to get to know each other better.



This diagram provides an overview of the process used to develop the Schools Campaign

#### The schools programmes used a methodology that had five central pillars:

- 1. Created a space that feels different from the 'traditional classroom'**
- 2. Used a participatory approach to keep the learners engaged**
- 3. Integrated practical and written exercises that involved personal reflection and engagement**
- 4. Use & build on the #WhatsYourStory? ask, listen, tell approach**
- 5. Involved teachers as co-facilitators**



Schools used the booklets that had been produced to guide the implementation of these sessions and Heartlines created an online platform with additional material for schools.

Teachers found the sessions extremely valuable and feedback included that they enjoyed that students were opening up to each other, they enjoyed getting to know their learners better and they were keen to find additional strategies to assist the learners to share. The sessions also highlighted that many learners did not feel safe at school.

Unfortunately the Covid-19 pandemic meant that the schools campaign was put on hold for some time due to limited access to schools

The #WhatsYourStory? school campaign website



Examples from the #WhatsYourStory? schools discussion guide



## Partner campaigns

Many of the project partners threw their weight behind the film, with many of the commercial partners arranging viewings of the films for their employees and stakeholders. These were arranged at local cinemas and even at their own corporate auditoriums

*Siseko Ntondini, Piers Cruickshank and Brad Fisher address the audience at a corporate viewing of the film.*



## Going Beyond the River

The film and documentary were shown at community events, at schools and at corporates. Some of these viewings were attended by Piers Cruickshanks and Siseko Ntondini and were followed by facilitated discussions and Q&A sessions.

The viewings acted as a jumping off point to discuss the role of sport in community and youth development. It show cased a model of community engagement where an established sports club like Dabulamanzi Canoe Club. It showed the benefits adopted a smaller development club like Soweto Canoe and Recreation Club, the benefits this kind of mentorship programme can have in communities especially those with few resources.

The Soweto Canoe and Recreation Club is a youth development initiative, sponsored by AdReach, First Rand, Euro Steel and the Laureus Sports for Good Foundation. Young kids from an informal settlement in Soweto are taught to swim and canoe (both on flat water and on rivers) and are mentored and supported by the Dabulamanzi Canoe Club and AdReach. It's an effective programme that has seen 1 500 young kids learn to swim and canoe and is paired with an education component that requires school attendance for progression through the canoe club.

“The film is linked closely to our Adopt a Project initiative. Through this initiative it gave participants [of the two canoeing clubs] an opportunity to mix with and reconcile with people that they would never normally meet. We pair education with sport and if every sports club adopted another club, it would make a huge difference in this country,” Steve Jourdan, Marketing Manager ADReach explains.

You can watch [this video](#) produced by the Laureus Sports for Good Foundation that captures the club's work and how it has been elevated by the making of Beyond the River.



### Going Beyond the River



*An additional component that emerged during the making of the film was a documentary titled Going Beyond the River.*

## Lessons learned

### Step 5: Designing the strategy



- The best resources for designing your strategy are the formative research and the message brief. Consult them again.
- Each component must be absolutely necessary, i.e., meet a specific objective in the strategy. Think carefully about what you would like each component to achieve. It is not necessary to be in all media but in those that can have the greatest impact.
- Each component must be complementary, that is, they must contribute to the fulfillment of the objectives. For example: they can reach different audiences, they can reinforce some messages, but all within the general framework of the strategy's objectives.
- All components must have campaign unity. They must feel and look like part of the same campaign. This should include the logo and slogan.
- Include opportunities for active participation. Identify partners to support the campaign.
- Work with professionals specialized in the different formats and audiences in each medium. For example: scriptwriters with experience in television for teenagers and young people.
- Include fresh minds, new ideas, new generations in your work teams.

# Pre-testing

## Step 6

**“** I realised that we all have been going through a lot. We display this persona that we all think we are fine. I have learned not to judge a book by its cover. Some people have been through worse things than I have, so I did not feel like I am a victim. **”**

- Beyond the River, audience pre-testing

### The EE Route

- 1 - Key decisions
- 2 - Formative research
- 3 - From research to message
- 4 - The story is the message
- 5 - Designing a multimedia strategy
- 6 - Pre-testing**
- 7 - Production
- 8 - Promotion
- 9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

**Chapter overview:** this chapter looks at the process of pre-testing all materials prior to distribution, to ensure their effectiveness and whether or not your intended messages are reaching the target audience.



## What is pre-testing?

One of the main features of Edutainment is evidence-based work. Pre-testing is an important part of your Edutainment strategy.

Pre-testing refers to the process of measuring or assessing what a group makes of a set of messages before they are aired. Ordinarily, people who assess the messages come from the intended audiences. In other cases, the validators are a group of experts.

Pre-testing aims to establish the target audience's reactions to the messages and identifies systematically, which are the most effective ones, and what needs to be modified or improved.

## What needs pre-testing?

Pre-testing has three objectives:

1. To ensure that the products being produced communicate the messages and generate the desired effects.
2. To guarantee that the products are really entertaining, that is to say, that there is identification with the characters and engagement with the stories.
3. To ensure a balance between education and entertainment.



**Pre-testing**  
**Jair Vega**

Research Director  
Breaking the Silence



## The techniques

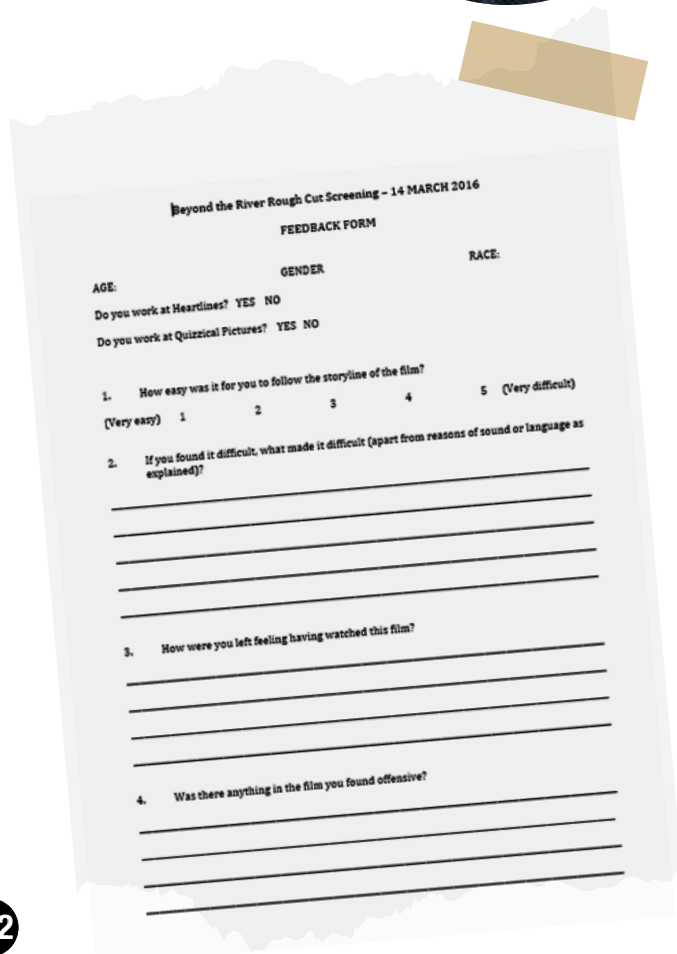
Focus groups are frequently used with the intended audiences because they encourage a more open discussion. Interviews are also used. It is crucial to prepare a methodology which includes the questions and precise instructions for the interviewers/moderators.

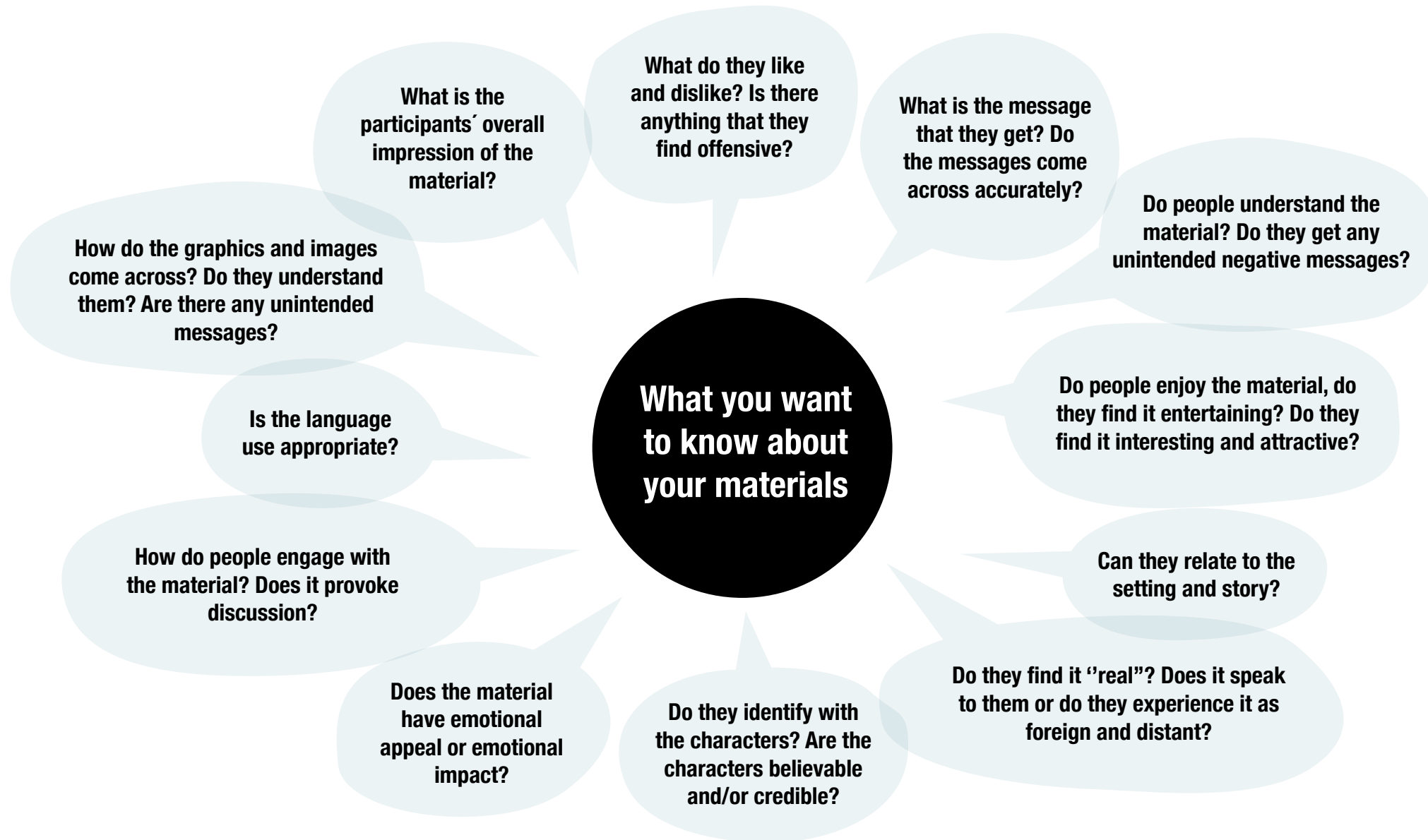
Also, it is essential to build a detailed report of the process, usually using a matrix with categories where a rapporteur transcribes and classifies the interventions by topic. Aim at having groups between 8 to 12 people of different genders, ethnic groups, regions, and socio-economic tiers. The moderator must be an excellent listener and should never voice their opinions.

When it comes to pre-testing material, focus group interviews or in some cases in-depth interviews are used. But the interviewing rules are relaxed to fulfil the needs associated with pre-testing material.

The interviewer maintains the basic open, non-directive attitude of a qualitative researcher. However, he or she needs to play a more interventionist role when it comes to probing and may ask several new questions in order to pursue something that emerged through the course of the pre-testing.

A funnel approach is a good way to do pre-testing. This means the initial questions are non-leading, open and exploratory and allow audience responses to emerge spontaneously before the detail and content issues are probed.





Not everything that the audience thinks needs to be changed. However, the decision must go through careful analysis to identify which feedback must be incorporated to enhance the production and which comments are incidental.



## Colombian Case Study

*“...the messages are tested, the characters are tested, the narrative arcs are tested, the scripts are tested and then the final products... This will guarantee that the content we produce carries the messages, that there are no unintended or contradictory messages and that it engages our audiences.”*

*- Jair Vega, Research Director  
Breaking the Silence*



### Pre-testing

Testing was ongoing throughout the process; each key element was pre-tested. The methodology was designed by the Universidad del Norte with support from Imaginario's research team. The focus group technique was used with the three target audiences: a group of teens and young people, a group of parents and caregivers, and a group of teachers. Many participants in these focus groups were invited to the various evaluation sessions and thus became aware of the process. Others attended only one focus group, so that both perspectives were taken into account. It should be noted that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, almost all of the sessions were virtual.

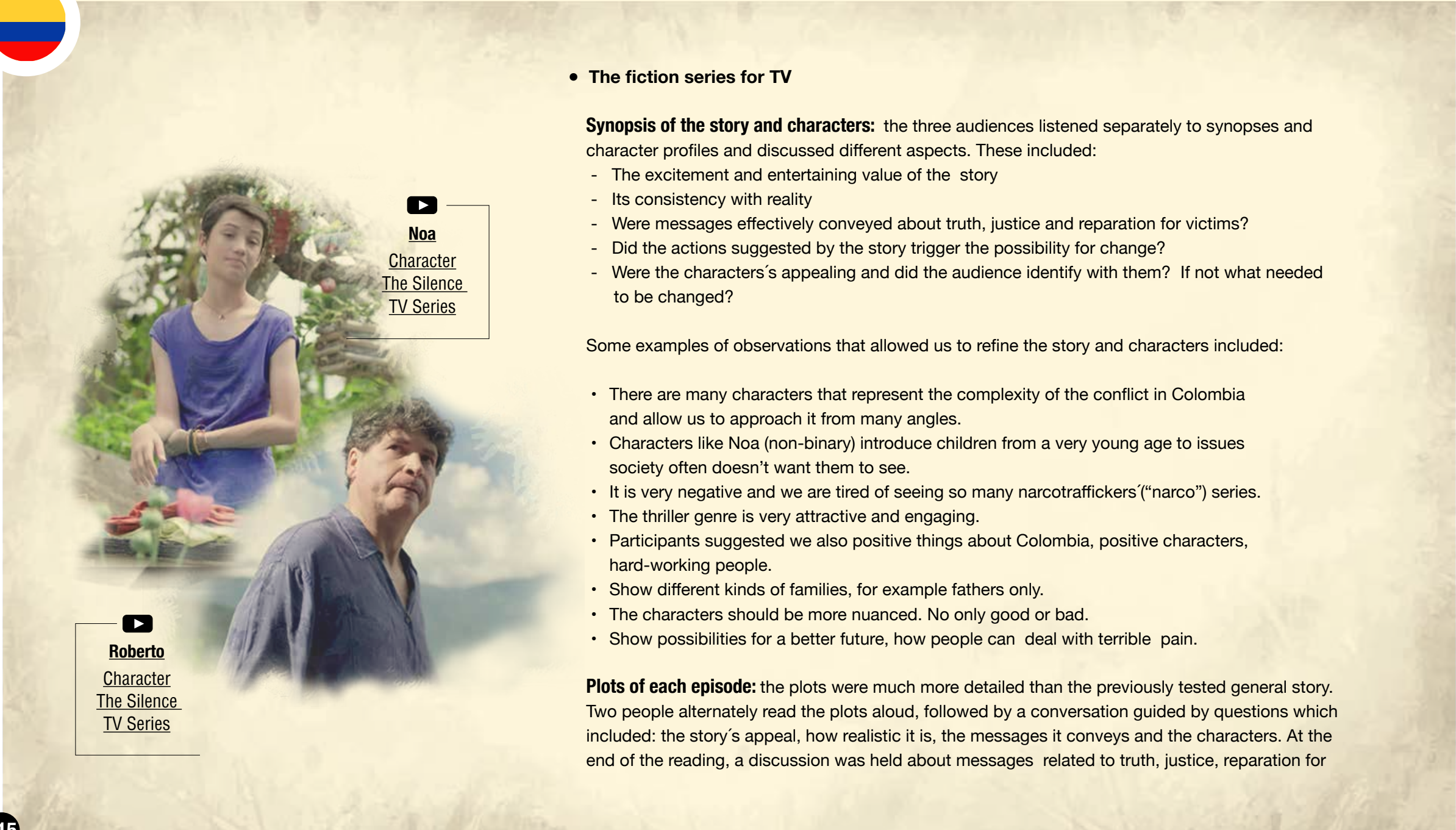
The findings were facilitated by members of the project group and reports were prepared. Non-participant observers (generally from the expert advisory group) were invited. After each evaluation, the moderators and observers presented their impressions to the project group. Subsequently, UNINORTE produced a pre-testing report and results were shared with the creative teams responsible for design and production.

### What was pretested?

- **The Message Brief**

Two versions were prepared, one for adults and one for teens and young people, with language appropriate for each audience. Testing aimed to assess:

- Comprehension. Was the message understood or not?
- Acceptance. Did the message contain offensive or unpleasant elements?
- Relevance. Was the message relevant and did it elicit a response or a call to action?



**Noa**  
Character  
The Silence  
TV Series



**Roberto**  
Character  
The Silence  
TV Series

- **The fiction series for TV**

**Synopsis of the story and characters:** the three audiences listened separately to synopses and character profiles and discussed different aspects. These included:

- The excitement and entertaining value of the story
- Its consistency with reality
- Were messages effectively conveyed about truth, justice and reparation for victims?
- Did the actions suggested by the story trigger the possibility for change?
- Were the characters's appealing and did the audience identify with them? If not what needed to be changed?

Some examples of observations that allowed us to refine the story and characters included:

- There are many characters that represent the complexity of the conflict in Colombia and allow us to approach it from many angles.
- Characters like Noa (non-binary) introduce children from a very young age to issues society often doesn't want them to see.
- It is very negative and we are tired of seeing so many narco-traffickers ("narco") series.
- The thriller genre is very attractive and engaging.
- Participants suggested we also positive things about Colombia, positive characters, hard-working people.
- Show different kinds of families, for example fathers only.
- The characters should be more nuanced. No only good or bad.
- Show possibilities for a better future, how people can deal with terrible pain.

**Plots of each episode:** the plots were much more detailed than the previously tested general story. Two people alternately read the plots aloud, followed by a conversation guided by questions which included: the story's appeal, how realistic it is, the messages it conveys and the characters. At the end of the reading, a discussion was held about messages related to truth, justice, reparation for



the victims, actions and transformations suggested in the series, as well as changes the participants would introduce.

- "One of the fundamental lessons that emerged is the need to revise one's perceptions or generalisations which are often stated about the armed conflict. For example, all landowners backed the paramilitaries or were part of this deathly project ... [in the series] we see a landowner with one position and another one with a different one; so thanks to this the generalisation is challenged and broken down. This is a very complicated issue that we have to address in this country."
- "...what I see is the possibility of becoming less judgemental of situations you are not familiar with, such as "he became a bad person or a guerrilla because he's cold hearted or because he likes "easy" money..."

**Final scripts:** this was one of the few pre-testing exercises that was carried out in person, with two groups of students: one in the municipality of La Plata, a rural area in the lowlands of the Andean region, and the other in Barranquilla, the largest city on the Caribbean coast. Twenty-nine boys and girls participated. The synopses were read out loud first in a plenary and then groups broke away to read each script separately and discuss its content. The purpose of the evaluation was to receive input, feedback and recommendations on the format and messages.

Some comments included:

- "So... it generates suspense, you feel like you want to know what's next and finish the story. You want to see a second season."
- "...the series is interesting because it includes things that happened and continue to happen, less dangerous and less risky than before and they show it in today's context."
- "...I don't think in the past it was common to see a person who doesn't identify with either the male or female gender, it's a current situation, it's inclusive."
- "...idioms from many regions of Colombia were combined in the dialogues, for example, there are words from the provinces of Boyacá, from Santander and even from Huila."



• **Fiction shorts – Monologues and profiles**

Three specific pieces of the short fiction formats were selected for pre-testing: Camocho (the demobilised guerrilla), Ruby (former guerrilla and now social leader), and their child Noa (non-binary). The objective was to receive contributions, reactions and recommendations on the format and messages. Less information was collected on the format, as the focus group audience preferred to share their opinions about the content.

- "They're grounded in reality, they're doing it right, they're telling the story with some really good characters. I mean: that was happening."

**About Camocho:**

- "A story that connects with reality".
- "It may offend those who were forcefully recruited."
- "I think that Camocho should end with a self-reflection about the bad things that happened."
- "It won't be so easy for viewers to accept that character."
- "I think there are Camochos everywhere."

**About Noa:**

- "A lot of us still stigmatise. I find this character unsettling, interesting, I like how Noa is constructed."
- "Noa has that sensitivity to the world and to differences".
- "It strikes me that Noa feels what any teenager can beyond feeling judged: Noa wants to feel they belongs and are cared for."



**Camocho**  
Character,  
The Silence  
TV Series



**Noa**  
Character  
The Silence  
TV Series



**Rubi**  
Character  
The Silence  
TV Series



**About Ruby:**

- "She goes on a profound journey, something that marked the rest of her life."
- "It's really nice to see a woman regain her dignity and I like that Noa has this mum."
- "I think in her performance she needs to depict she's more worried and uneasy about the uncertainty of murdering someone, because she comes across as telling any kind of story."

Due to opinions expressed by focus groups participants, two additional pre-testing exercises of Camocho and Ruby's monologues were carried out with demobilised guerrilla members, in order to find out more about the sensitivities that could emerge from watching these pieces and how credible they were. The results were excellent.



- **Podcast Series**

Two groups took part: high school students - 12 to 15 years, who had already participated in previous pre-testing groups and university students, 19 and 24 years old, who were invited for the first time. The questions included perceptions about the quality of the series, its characters, its stories and plot, the dialogue messages, and debates.

- "The students expressed their enjoyment of the podcast, the way it was told and they said they connected with the subject matter. They said they enjoyed the music and even felt like dancing. They highlighted the hostess' voice-over and the calmness it transmits and the precision with which the facts are told, as well as the organisation of the podcast and the way in which the narratives alternate. The students commented that they would not modify anything to the podcast and that the new musical genre showcased catches their attention." (Jair Vega. Research Director. Romper el Silencio)

- **Resources Kit for Schools**

The objective of this evaluation was to test the quality of the package, format, methodology and usability. The exercise was carried out in person, with teachers.

- "I would include it as an intersectional subject in the whole area of social sciences".
- "Something I really liked about the process is that there is a lot of cultural diversity, there are stories of indigenous people, stories of Afros and that is good, to see from the different cultures and processes how they exercise their ideals".





- **Documentary Series**

This pretesting was attended by a group of teachers and a group of students between 14 and 16 years old none of the guests had participated in previous testing groups. A second cut of one of the documentaries, on the history of the paramilitaries, series was screened and the format and messages were discussed. For the teachers, this type of work is fundamental in Colombia and can be very useful. They felt that it provides an opportunity to construct historical memory, because a large part of the population is unaware of these events. The students emphasised that both victims and perpetrators are given a voice. They were struck by the issues and the events that arise from it. It triggered feelings of nostalgia and disappointment and frustration towards the institutions of the State Although they admitted that they do not usually look for this type of material on their own, they said that it is necessary to know the history and that this type of content, which they considered to be truthful and objective, was necessary. They would recommend it to their classmates and family members.

- **Radio show format**

This pretesting was carried out with a group of adult professionals. The methodology was a live radio programme broadcast with the participants invited as its audience. At the end of the programme, the coordinator asked them questions about the issues addressed. There were few responses despite the encouragement of the “radio host”. However, once the exercise was over, questions were asked directly to the participants. Their reaction was positive and they insisted on the value of dealing with such topics and giving the audience a voice. They considered the discussion format to be innovative.

- **The branding**

The branding was first developed with a smaller creative team. Once there was an agreed proposal, this final idea of the name, logo and slogan was first pretested with the rest of the team, and in a second round with partners - including the Truth Commission - in which the final shortlist and its rationales were discussed.



## South African Case Study

“ I love that fact that it shows that reconciliation is not just about making peace with one another; it is about our interdependence, and how each needs the other to be complete.”

- Pre-testing audience research.



Zama and Duma hide from the police in the opening scenes of the film.

### Pre-testing

Heartlines used a vigorous testing approach throughout the project to ensure that the final film was authentic and resonated with the key target audiences. They used an organisation called Young and Able for pre-testing.

This process started with a script reading workshop. Out of this process it was decided that certain aspects of the script could be removed and one of the characters was unnecessary.

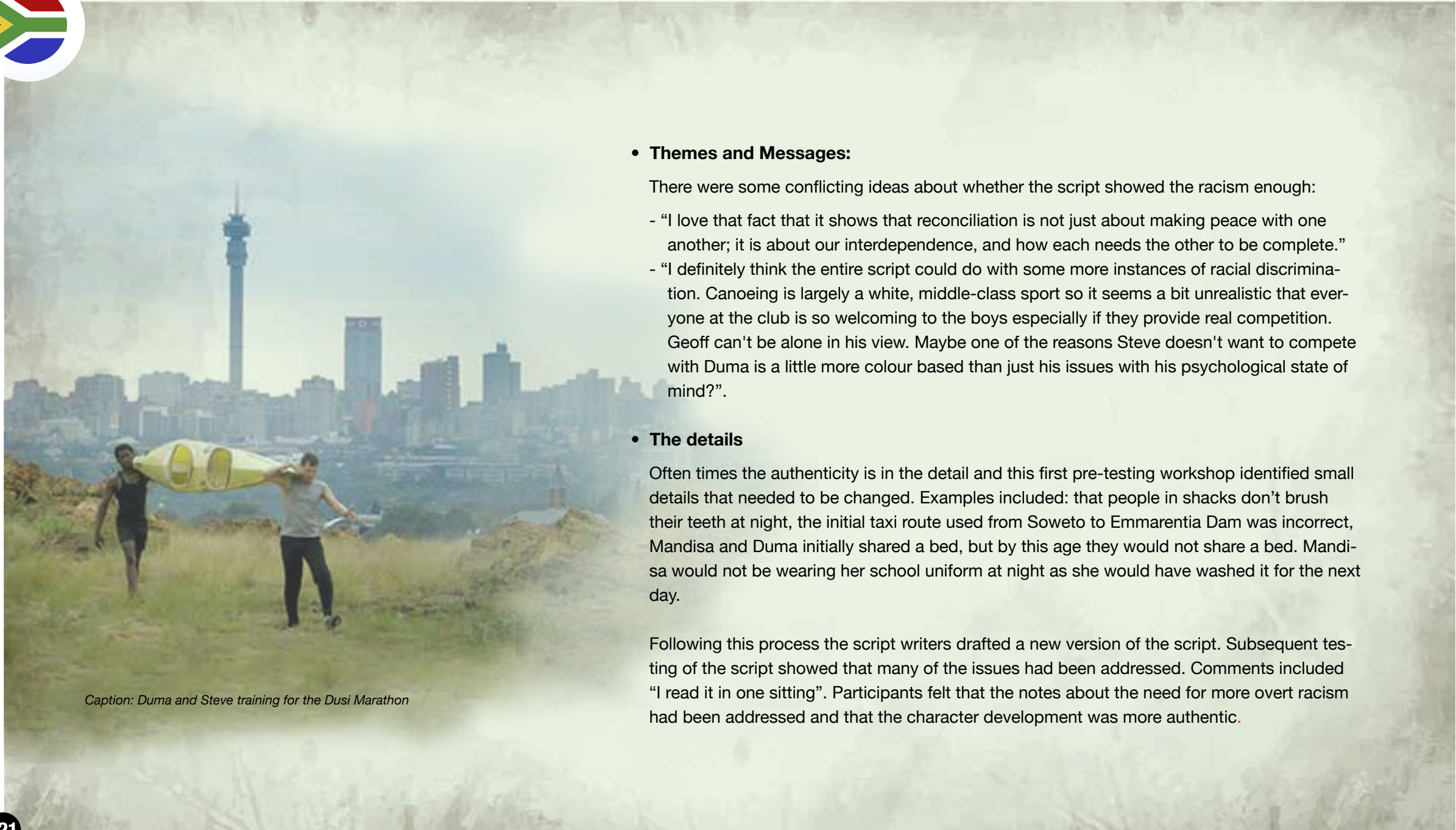
Some of the comments that came out of the pre-testing were:

- **Plot**

- “The pace was generally good. The first 30-40 pages could be tightened though. The chase scene at the beginning goes on too long and is unrealistic, in that they would have been able to disappear much more easily.”

- **Characters**

- Steve: “Steve and Duma become mates too soon. There should be more misunderstandings and the change should be more gradual. There needs to be more real and open conversations between them. The dog scene comes too early – they are too “buddy-buddy already.”



*Caption: Duma and Steve training for the Dusi Marathon*

- **Themes and Messages:**

There were some conflicting ideas about whether the script showed the racism enough:

- “I love that fact that it shows that reconciliation is not just about making peace with one another; it is about our interdependence, and how each needs the other to be complete.”
- “I definitely think the entire script could do with some more instances of racial discrimination. Canoeing is largely a white, middle-class sport so it seems a bit unrealistic that everyone at the club is so welcoming to the boys especially if they provide real competition. Geoff can't be alone in his view. Maybe one of the reasons Steve doesn't want to compete with Duma is a little more colour based than just his issues with his psychological state of mind?”.

- **The details**

Often times the authenticity is in the detail and this first pre-testing workshop identified small details that needed to be changed. Examples included: that people in shacks don't brush their teeth at night, the initial taxi route used from Soweto to Emmarentia Dam was incorrect, Mandisa and Duma initially shared a bed, but by this age they would not share a bed. Mandisa would not be wearing her school uniform at night as she would have washed it for the next day.

Following this process the script writers drafted a new version of the script. Subsequent testing of the script showed that many of the issues had been addressed. Comments included “I read it in one sitting”. Participants felt that the notes about the need for more overt racism had been addressed and that the character development was more authentic.



*Caption: Duma's sister, Mandisa outside their shack.*

### **Insights from technical partners**

In addition to pre-testing with key audience members, funding partners South African National Film and Video Foundation required a technical review of the script and a report. The report found that the script was compelling, that the three worlds depicted were authentic and that, the film had a strong structure and characterisation.

### **First impressions of the film**

Following this series of pre-testing, the film was produced and it was tested with key target audiences. Overall the film was well received with comments including “the depiction of township life is good” and “it nicely shows the different realities that people experience”.

But it did identify areas where the audience needed clarity. For example people were unclear on Annie’s role, there was still some confusion with Steve’s dream scenes and that the ending seemed rushed. One participant commented “the end feels too rushed. People need more time to celebrate the high”. These final comments were addressed in the final edits.

### **Audience feedback**

Heartlines also developed a questionnaire for audiences to complete after viewing the rough cut screening. This questionnaire was a simple feedback form that investigated how easy the storyline was to follow, how audience members were left feeling after the film, if they found anything offensive and if they were to discuss anything about the film afterwards with a friend, what would they talk about.



Beyond the River Rough Cut Screening - 14 MARCH 2016  
FEEDBACK FORM

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_ GENDER: \_\_\_\_\_ RACE: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you work at Heartlines? YES NO

Do you work at Quizzical Pictures? YES NO

1. How easy was it for you to follow the storyline of the film?  
(Very easy) 1 2 3 4 5 (Very difficult)

2. If you found it difficult, what made it difficult (apart from reasons of sound or language as explained)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. How were you left feeling having watched this film?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Was there anything in the film you found offensive?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This was a good way to gauge the impact of the film and if the main messages from the film would inspire people to share their own personal stories.

### Funder inputs

Partners often come to the table with their own agenda and needs for the project. In particular funding and commercial partners on this project wanted to ensure that their brands were provided with the kind of exposure they expected.

“Commercial partners have a whole other agenda and this can come down to minute details. For example, our funding partner Discovery wanted their branding on a specific part of the boat but the art director wanted it placed somewhere different and we had to navigate these issues.” In addition we needed to work around funder processes and timelines. For example the NFVF required viewings of rushes of the film in order to release another funding tranche, explains Jennifer Charlton, Beyond the River Executive Producer.

## Lessons learned

### Step 6: Pre-testing



- Pre-testing is a crucial part of the Edutainment process. It serves to ensure the clarity, relevance and appeal of each piece of content. It is non-negotiable.
- Pre-testing requires a methodological approach; it is not an intuitive, improvised or disjointed process. The methodology must have clear objectives and provide the researchers with a clear guide to what they are looking for.
- Key for pre-testing are the target audiences and, in some cases, the experts. It is a matter of getting their opinion before finally producing the content and broadcasting it.
- Edutainment is best suited to qualitative methods because they allow for a deeper conversation with the target audiences, for example, focus groups and in-depth interviews, although there are many others.
- Pre-testing should be carried out throughout the entire design and production process. You will see how the negative comments or disagreements expressed by audiences will decrease each time.
- A comprehensive report on your pre-testing findings, allows teams to make better decisions. Data Analysis should be done by people with experience in this type of research.

# Production

Step 7

## The EE Route

- 1 - Key decisions
- 2 - Formative research
- 3 - From research to message
- 4 - The story is the message
- 5 - Designing a multimedia strategy
- 6 - Pre-testing
- 7 - Production**
- 8 - Promotion
- 9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

*“ To be honest, to me the story got me intrigued... it condensed a lot of feelings between mystery, suspense and drama ... ”*

*- Pre-testing, adolescents and young adults, Romper el Silencio. Colombia*

*Chapter overview: this chapter covers the production stage.*

## Production

Now you are ready to produce your Edutainment. The most important aspect at this stage is to ensure the quality of the production. The actual production will be largely in the hands of your creative team, who have the skills and the resources to produce the final broadcast, print material or live drama. But it is important that you play an active role during the production process to ensure that the final product meets your needs and expectations.

### Here are a few guidelines to quality control your production:

- 1 • Ensure you have a legally binding contract. This at least will ensure that the producers deliver on time and on budget.
- 2 • Make sure the creative team are involved from the beginning at the Message Design Workshop.
- 3 • You are the custodian of the message. You need to protect the goals of the campaign. At the same time, be open to creative input and ideas. Make it clear in the contract that the final say rests with you and not the creative team.
- 4 • A safeguard is to have a member of the project team on set at all critical times when a sensitive scene is coming up.
- 5 • View rough cuts of footage shot that day. This will give you a feel of how the director and actors are interpreting the story. It is expensive to reshoot something so it needs to be serious for you to request that.
- 6 • In the case of live drama, attend rehearsals and give feedback to the producer immediately.
- 7 • With print materials, check the design pages and then check final page proofs before they go to print. Be sure that the design is fresh, but that it also makes the text readable.



## TV Feedback Guidelines

Below is a TV Feedback Guide. Use the questions as a guideline for the kind of things you should look out for when you check scripts and produce episodes.

### 1. Does the episode follow the message/adaptation brief?

- Are all the messages covered and clear?
- Have the messages been brought to life? Has it been made personal and real?
- How do the episode and people in the story make you feel?
- Is the information correct and the emphasis right?
- Are there any unintended messages coming through?
- What did the pre-test of the scripts say?
- What needs to change? How?

### 2. Who needs to review this episode from a development point of view?

- Who do you need to ask?
- What is the issue that you particularly want to check?

### 3. Is the story engaging?

- Is the story engaging and exciting?
- Does it have pace and rhythm? Does the story keep your attention through to the end?
- Are the characters believable and empathetic?

### 4. Are there any technical problems?

- Is the sound okay? Look out for background fuzzes, uneven dips in the sound, echoes and inaudibility.
- Are images clear and in focus?
- Are voices in sync with the sound?
- Is the sound mix ok? Is the background music louder than the voices or too intrusive?

### 5. Final checks:

- Are credits correct?
- Check subtitles. Both in terms of the accuracy of the translation and spelling
- Are the donor logos correct colour and format and are they clearly visible?

The most important part of quality control is to ensure that you choose a service provider that you trust and whose work is of a high standard. Don't be afraid to ask questions about the production process and to be clear on the appropriate moments for making changes. This is crucial, as interventions at the last minute or when things are far down the line can be costly or worst case, can't be changed at all.



# Colombian Case Study



## Production

The production of the different components of Romper el Silencio was led by specialised teams, chosen for their experience in the specific media and the quality of their work. Knowledge or interest in the issues addressed by the Truth Commission and /or the Comprehensive Peace System was also a criteria considered when building the teams.

All teams were trained in the Edutainment methodology through workshops with international partners and global leaders in the field. They were informed of the findings and recommendations of the formative research process and the messages contained in the Message Brief. Subsequently, a Creative Workshop was held for each component, so the basic guidelines for each one of them were defined. The teams then worked in tandem on the development and production of each component, with the supervision of a member of the strategy's core team.

Although this way of working allowed each component to progress and its team to focus on what it did best, there were challenges in reaching the expected synergy, consistency and coherence between the different formats. The diversity in the production models as well as the independent pretesting processes in some instances, implied that

the teams, working independently, were not aware of the progress the others were making.

In this sense, the role of the Message Guardian and the members of the content team who acted as liaison was fundamental.

But undoubtedly, the most difficult challenge of this process was the complexity of the issues and themes addressed. This requires ongoing care to avoid unintended messaging and a “do no harm” perspective. But it is also immensely complex, to delve into the feelings, perceptions and social constructs of diverse and often contrary protagonists, in a conflict that has lasted so many years. The creative teams were sensitive to, the realities that many had never experienced and the demands of such a delicate process.

Understanding the Colombian armed conflict demanded many sessions with the Message Guardians, experts historians and specialists, as well as with victims and perpetrators. And naturally, with the audiences and partners. This meant that the process became a much longer and more intense process than planned.



**Abelardo**  
Character  
The Silence TV Series



## Monologues and profiles

Whilst the fundraising for the TV series production progressed, the idea to produce fiction shorts came up, not only as examples of the series' creative and technical quality, but also as an example of the treatment of the issues.

### Diego Mejía, Director, narrates his experience:

*"I came up with the idea of showcasing the series' characters living a specific moment, or telling a story from their past. We didn't have the budget to do more fiction. To make the work very solid, I thought of doing monologues with professional actors that I knew, and which we could include later in the final series. Some of them are very committed to the peace process in Colombia or were already collaborating with the Truth Commission. They couldn't be very well known actors, because - obviously - nobody was going to believe that a commercial TV star was a guerrilla fighter or a struggling indigenous person. We chose quite a few actors from the world of theater. I looked for two writers who had staged important productions and had won awards and I researched for many hours; I read, listened to audiences and immersed myself in the actors of the conflict, paramilitaries, guerrilla fighters, army soldiers who shot innocent people to increase the guerrilla's body counts, who are victims and perpetrators at the same time... I wrote a synopsis of each character and gave it to the scriptwriters and playwrights. They turned them into very significant life stories that were then reviewed by the Message Guardian and others responsible for the content, the "repressors"... "the censors" (laughs). This was actually a very interesting, very demanding collective creative process."*

*Filming took four days, in sixteen different locations near Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, which resemble the conflict zones where the series is set. Twenty-eight people were involved in the filming. "The filming was difficult because it was in the middle of the rainy season. The editing and scoring process was also arduous. It was a very useful experience given that we managed to do it in such a short amount of time. It's two hundred minutes of high quality television." (Diego Mejía, Director.)*



## Podcast series

Podcasts have been gaining traction in Colombia, although mainly amongst adult audiences. In order to attract young people to this media format, the idea was to use music as a hook.

Federico Serna, Producer of Tembe, a communication collective focused on social research and sound creation, in charge of the development and production of the six podcast episodes, shares his experiences:

*"The process was based on an analysis of the messages; from there, core thematic guidelines were developed into each episode. Then characters were identified and interviews were developed. Finally, we went into post-production. We had to face a lot of challenges. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the production was not done on location. Creating trust and empathy with people by cell phone or video calls is much more difficult, but it was successfully achieved. This affected the technical component too: Our characters were out there in the territories and the connectivity was not very good. We had to figure out how to talk to them, record them and get good quality audio. The copyright issue has also been complicated because we included the songs we needed and liked the most and then we had to contact each artist, which is always very time consuming, because it implies building trust in the project. This is being achieved and it's very cool."*

Simona Sanchez, the hostess/presenter, was selected because she has a very powerful voice and a lot of followers, which we think is very important for the podcasts' broadcast.

*Simona is a well-known public radio presenter with expertise in new Colombian musical talent, active in human rights and gender equity and was involved in the Truth Commission's communication activities.*



## Documentaries

The formative research identified a clear need to produce content that would help create an interest in the country's recent history and the causes of the armed conflict, and that would complement the emotional engagement of fiction with a more factual approach. The central objective of this component is to contribute to the distinctive element of Romper el Silencio: a critical historical perspective.

The final result is a very powerful series of three feature documentaries and 20 shorts, unique in Colombia and particularly for this audience. The structure, script writing and editing style was specially time consuming and complex to achieve. The mixed styles' narrative and the challenge of unpacking historical facts in an entertaining way for a young audience in 30 mins, required intricate creative and writing work, with the close supervision of the Message Guardians. The voice-over needed to connect the segments and formats. This required a "trial and error" process.

**Tatiana Vila, producer of the non-fiction components, shares her impressions:**

*"It was decided that the documentary series' products would consist of three half-hour documentaries, one for each main armed conflict actor: insurgencies, paramilitaries and the State. And seventeen shorts that would allow the audiences to listen to the voices of victims, perpetrators and experts on conflict and peace processes."*





*There were very interesting processes in articulating the wide and diverse range of expertise. A team of more than 25 people worked hand in hand with the Message Guardian to define the structure and preliminary scripts, based on the formative research carried out by the team and following the Message Brief's guidelines.*

*The production experience and connecting the different content was intense due to the complexity of the themes, the format selected (the reference format was the "Explained" series in Netflix) and the time restrictions. The previous workshops with other countries were an inspiration and allowed our creativity to fly. After multiple team meetings and with the support of the Message Guardian, the documentaries were able to find their shape and meaning and a narrative to address the issues with a youthful and fresh language. Elements such as animation, music and archival intervention were key to this process. The use of archival material allowed us to invite the audience on a journey through our past.*

*In the team we feel that the EE methodology allowed us to develop a communication tool that contributed to social transformation. It's a very powerful tool, which can be very successful in triggering large scale national dialogue in massive spaces, but also in smaller and more intimate spaces, such as the family's living room, or the school's classroom".*





## Educational package

In Colombia, the teaching of History as a subject matter was removed from the school curriculum several years ago. Despite this, social sciences teachers normally include history and related themes in their teaching plans. How this is done depends on the teachers' background, creativity and access to educational resources, as well as the specific schools' approach as the education system allows independence in curriculum plans. This situation has resulted in young people's ignorance and a misunderstanding of the past and its implications for the present.

The EE strategy's formative research found confusion and lack of knowledge amongst the target audiences regarding recent history and, in particular, the armed conflict. And as mentioned in Step 5, research also identified a heartfelt request from teachers for resources and materials to help them address the topic in the classroom. Although teaching history is not the specific objective of this educational package, it does seek to foster critical historical thinking. As part of the strategy's public policy advocacy, the objective is to have the Romper el Silencio's platform and content inserted into the new guidelines about teaching History, which is being debated at present in Colombia.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, for the production of this educational package, the authors received some strategic guidelines:

- first, the requirement for the material to interact with and be permanently nourished by the fiction series and other components of Breaking the Silence (documentaries, podcasts, short fiction pieces, radio, web page).
- secondly, the convenience of adjusting it to the core learning competencies and rights (DBAs – Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje) required by the Colombian Ministry of Education, to facilitate its insertion in the eighth and ninth grade curriculum.
- thirdly, develop a methodology focused on dialogue and the consultation of different sources and points of view on some key facts and events related to the armed conflict, to bring about historical thinking with a critical perspective.

<sup>3</sup> The peace agreement signed in 2016 includes specific legislation (Ley 2017) to include History again which has triggered a very rich and dynamic debate as well as controversial, polarized and ideological postures on the meaning of truth and historical facts.



Due to the limited time restriction, the four authors worked simultaneously, each one on a topic, based on a structure developed by the project's academic expert, and the rigorous guidance of the Message Guardian. Although this allowed the writing to flow this was a much more time-consuming. An editorial review process had to ensure the texts adhered to the common structure, length, type of language, the chapters' breakdown, the graphic design guidelines and much more. As an example: the grammar standards to use inclusive language (los/las, lxs, los(as), etc.).

For the design and layout of the package, a company with extensive editorial experience, rather than commercial design experience, was chosen. The creatives from this company were present during the critical design processes of the EE strategy, such as the presentation of the formative research, the message design workshop, the feedback from the various pre-testing exercises, etc. This was done to ensure their understanding and in-depth knowledge of the themes and their complexity.

One of the challenges the editorial team faced was the use of images. Often, the photographs available in the image banks are very commercial in nature and do not represent issues such as conflict or discrimination well. As a result, it was necessary to carry out rights' clearance processes with independent photographers and the media. Another additional difficulty was the fact that the editorial team did not have access to the final selection of images of the fiction or documentary pieces. The final cuts were not available at the time when the package was being developed. It was only at the end of the Toolkit production process that the images of the documentary series could be incorporated in the texts.

The creation and revision through participatory processes played an important role. The designers interacted with the authors, the Message Guardian, the editor, the experts and, in general, with the core EE team on several occasions. There was also a face-to-face pre-testing exercise with teachers to receive feedback on the methodology and usability of the schools' resources.





## South African Case Study

“ I saw *Beyond the River* yesterday. By chance in the audience were about 40 young people from surrounding townships. Their exuberance was as wonderful as the movie. They sighed, laughed, stomped their feet and applauded throughout. The movie moved me ... all that we are, inequality indifference, ignorance and slights by the privileged ... but transformative”

– Audience response



*Piers Cruickshank was the stunt double for Steve in the film*

### Production

#### Making it happen on set

Heartlines contracted Quizzical Pictures to produce the film. Filming started in October 2015 and after a break over Christmas, was completed in February 2016. Post production was completed by October 2016, and the film launched in cinemas in April 2017.

As with any production the team encountered several challenges. Some of the technical challenges included difficulty in casting actors that were able to canoe, instead the team decided to cast the best actors and train them to canoe. The actors trained for four months in preparation for filming with the help of a South African Olympic canoeist. For the more technical aspects, the team used Siseko Ntondini and Piers Cruickshanks (the pair who inspired the story) as stunt doubles.

Another unique challenge was filming on the water.. Some of the questions the production team had to answer were: where is the camera? how do you film canoeing? The team also grappled with the challenges of filming on unstable, moving boats. To get around this the team often used different techniques including filming with a long lens, on the river bank and at other times they used small boats with a bungee rig.



*The crew on set on the Dusi River*



**Making Beyond the River**



*The crew used clever techniques to create the illusion of fast flowing rivers, despite being filmed during a drought.*

But perhaps the biggest challenge was that filming took place during one of the worst droughts that South Africa has experienced for decades. This meant that there was not enough water in many of the rivers and much of the production team's plans weren't feasible. This required really clever thinking to create the illusion of fast flowing rivers.



*Green screen scenes being filmed*



*Drone footage of the Dusi River.*

Another major challenge was capturing the sense of place, to convey the beauty of the Dusi River which passes through the Valley of a Thousand Hills in KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. To get the impressive establishing shots the team relied heavily on drone footage. The team also made use of green screens for the car and cable theft scenes. This was a way to produce high quality content more cost-effectively.



**Drones and green screens**

In addition we needed footage of the actual Dusi Canoe Marathon taking place. Heartlines was very lucky that the Dusi Canoe Marathon organisers very generously provided the production team with all of their footage for use in the film.

As with any production the team behind the scenes can make or break a project. The Beyond the River team included talented actors, writers, directors as well as an impressive crew who all collaborated and pulled together to produce a high quality film.



*Recreating scenes from the Dusi Marathon*

## Lessons learned

### Step 7: Production



- Ensure that all members of the production team know the formative research and the Message Document.
- Make sure you arrive at production with pre-tested materials. Making corrections during the production stage can be costly or even impossible.
- Work with people who specialize in media production. This is a task in which professionals are required.
- Quality is very important. The message is indispensable. Don't give up on either.
- Production can take considerable time; consult with specialists for proper planning.
- Production costs may vary across different media, and depending on different suppliers. Look for various alternatives.
- Ensure that the Message Guardian or a person well versed in the strategy oversees the production and has the final say.



Step 8

# Promotion

**“** The strength of edutainment lies not only in its immediate impact but also in its ability to act as a catalyst for other activities with the same objective and goal. Your edutainment is a brand that can leverage other opportunities. **”**

- Harriet Perlman, EE Producer

## The EE Route

- 1 - Key decisions
- 2 - Formative research
- 3 - From research to message
- 4 - The story is the message
- 5 - Designing a multimedia strategy
- 6 - Pre-testing
- 7 - Production
- 8 - Promotion**
- 9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

**Chapter overview:** this chapter outlines the basic principles for the promotion of the production to the target audiences.

## Successfully promoting your Edutainment

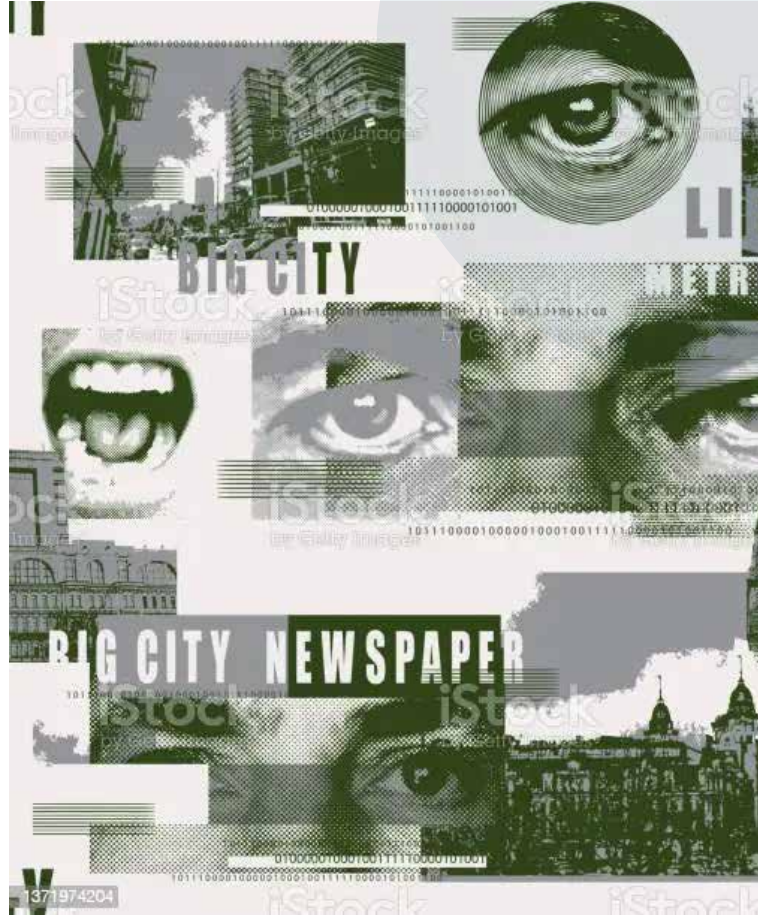
The more popular the Edutainment, the more powerful the impact will be. Publicity aims to drive audience numbers and interest in your campaign—before, during and after the Edutainment is aired. The beauty of successful Edutainment is that its popularity opens up new avenues that allow you to further communicate your messages to your audiences. This chapter looks at different ways to promote your Edutainment before, during and after its implementation.

### Step 1: initial marketing and pre-publicity

This is the period just before your Edutainment starts, when you use all the means at your disposal to build an audience.

Plan for the initial marketing and pre-publicity early on when you are still developing the Edutainment. Then as soon as you know the date when the show begins, you are ready to implement your publicity strategy.

How you advertise your Edutainment depends on the scale of your project. For a small-scale project you can use your internal project team to brainstorm ideas. With a large scale project, you may prefer to hire professional marketing and advertising people. Don't forget to plan for this cost in your funding proposal. Advertising agencies can be expensive, so be sure you are getting value for money.



Here are some pre-publicity ideas:

- If you haven't already, decide on your logo and a tagline. It is a good idea to pre-test your logo, brand name and tagline to make sure it is relevant and appropriate and it resonates with your audiences.
- For a TV or radio show think of a theme tune. Catchy theme tunes can build brand recognition and identification.
- Use popular or famous people. For example, if people know that your production features a popular actor or actress, they will be far more likely to watch it.
- Carry out a conventional advertising campaign. Use a variety of media to encourage people to watch/listen to your Edutainment. These can include social media, billboards, adverts on buses and bus stops, newspaper and magazine adverts, radio and TV promos.
- Enlist the support of journalists to give positive media coverage of your Edutainment before it starts.

If you are doing a local small-scale Edutainment project you can also use people who go from door to door to invite audiences to the event; or a loudspeaker to announce the dates and times of your performance. You can also put up posters in shops and schools and other public places.

#### • A launch

Having an official launch function may be worth the money. It can cement campaign partnerships and give good media coverage, especially if there are dignitaries or celebrities present.

If your Edutainment is ongoing, your pre-publicity will become a lot easier as time goes by. If your Edutainment is popular, subsequent series or seasons will inherit its popularity. Your first series of a television drama may take time to build a loyal audience. But if people liked it, they would start watching the second series from the very first day. It's the same with music.

## Step 2: consolidation

Continue to promote your Edutainment once it begins. What counts now is the quality of your product. If it is good, it will promote itself through word of mouth. If not, no amount of promotion will save it! The following strategies will help to consolidate and reinforce this promotion:



- **Ongoing publicity**

You can use any of the tools you used in pre-publicity. Newspaper reviews are good while you are on air, to draw in wider circles of people to the show. Email reminders, newspaper adverts with story teasers. Tweets or posts on Facebook can help keep audience excitement alive week after week.

- **Using more than one medium**

If you have chosen a multimedia approach, one medium can refer to and promote the other(s). A strong brand name that ties everything together is crucial for this.

- **Competitions**

Competitions are a great way to sustain interest in your Edutainment. For example, it keeps viewers of a TV series watching from one week to the next. Competitions can also link your different media. You can announce a competition on radio but place the entry-form in your print publication. Competitions can also be a useful research tool. They can tell you whether people are learning from your Edutainment.

### **Step 3: capitalising**

Capitalise on the Edutainment's popularity and credibility by using its brand name to launch other initiatives.

The strength of Edutainment lies not only in its immediate impact, but also in its ability to act as a catalyst for other activities with the same objective and goal. Your Edutainment is a brand that can leverage other opportunities.

Think of a well-known brand, such as Nike for example. Through careful marketing and promotion, Nike has established a reputation for quality and for being part of the “in” scene. As a result, people are prepared to pay a lot more for Nike products than for their unbranded equivalents. It is the name Nike that is popular with people, and this name lends its popularity and credibility to all its products—shoes, shirts, caps or socks.

The same principle applies to the marketing of an Edutainment programme. Once its popularity has been built up, other initiatives bearing the same name will ride on, and benefit from, the credibility and popularity of the Edutainment brand.

A successful Edutainment brand can have multiple spinoffs.

Below are four ideas which you can build on. They have been discussed in other chapters but it is useful to look at them afresh in light of a marketing strategy. Remember you can use one medium to market another.

- Supporting other initiatives around the same issues
- Creating educational packages
- Using Edutainment characters as advocates of your messages
- Spreading your brand name

- **Use actors as advocates**

Use popular characters from your Edutainment as role models for your campaign or to draw people to the Edutainment in the first place. People love celebrities and are receptive to listening to them. Create opportunities such as events or community dialogues for the actors to go into communities. They carry credibility and authority. You need to prepare the actor so that what they say is in line with your message brief.

- **Spread your brand name**

You can attach your brand name to other small media initiatives that relate to your messages. T-shirts, mugs and caps can all carry messages. Sometimes the item itself is a message. For example, condoms that carry your brand. Conventional entertainment provides many examples of this. Disney does it all the time. For example, the film Frozen spawned an array of toys, clothing, games and school materials, which all capitalised on the success of the show to create demand for the products.





- **Social media**

In today's rapidly changing communication environment, a successful campaign needs to use social networking platforms. Social media has been discussed as a media format for Edutainment. But it is also an excellent marketing tool. It can keep your brand and campaign alive in both public and private spaces and drive audience numbers and interest in the series—before, during and after you air it.

Social media tools for marketing can include:

- Facebook and Twitter to market the Edutainment virally and keep ongoing two-way conversation alive
- A web page can provide online resources and more detailed information
- A dedicated YouTube channel so that your media can be accessed on demand
- Live chats can provide a platform for viewers to engage with experts or celebrities in real time

Social media is an online conversation where anyone who has internet access and an opinion can join in. Fans, employees, critics, donors, politicians, men, women and teenagers can all talk to one another. Social media can help you in marketing, self-promotion and public relations.

- Use social media to create a buzz for your campaign. Encourage partner and staff to tweet and post on the Facebook pages. Don't try and control the conversation, be a part of it.
- Use social media to increase brand exposure and get your name out there.

Social media requires someone in your team to update it every day to keep an eye on the conversation and join in so that it feels alive, fresh and in real time. But remember, don't force the conversation or try to control it. Keep it fun!



# Colombian Case Study



## Promotion

As the television series has not been produced at the time of writing this manual, Rompiedo el Silencio has not yet designed a promotion and distribution strategy. However, the fundraising activities both for local and international resources and co-producers, as well as the broadcast screens estimated for mid-2023, have required several pieces of communication.

## Bible

The intention of the strategy's producers and partners is to ensure that the main component - the fiction series El Silencio - is able to compete with the best entertainment on air, in mainstream channels with the highest audience, both private and public, and on demand platforms. What is known in the local industry as the "Bible" was prepared. This is a portfolio that presents - with very commercial arguments - the storyline, the universe, the characters, the locations and, in general, an idea as close as possible to the production standards.





## Monologues and video profiles

Subsequently, it was necessary to have some audiovisual pieces that would show the style and quality of the production. Monologues and video profiles of the characters were produced, which turned out to be so powerful that they became pieces to incorporate in the educational package, and for mobilisation and undoubtedly for the promotion of the strategy as a whole.



▶ **Marcela**  
Character  
The Silence  
TV Series



▶ **Giovani**  
Character  
The Silence  
TV Series

## Trailers

The strategy also has several trailers for its various components:

- ▶ **Trailer for the documentary series Romper el Silencio**
- **Trailer for TV series El Silencio**
- **Trailer for podcast Romper el Silencio**
- **Trailer for Romper el Silencio radio PSAs**







## South African Case Study

“Imagine a South Africa where, instead of creating more negative stereotypes about others, we start getting to know each other better by sharing our stories.”

– Audience response; social media  
*Beyond the River*



*Israel Makoe, the actor who plays Oupa in the film*

### Promotion

#### Getting it out there

Heartlines used the full suite of marketing tools available to promote and publicise the film. The team developed the *Beyond the River* logo and corporate identity, in addition to this a full corporate identity was developed for the #WhatsYourStory? campaign.

- **Film launch**

Heartlines hosted a traditional film launch at a cinema in Johannesburg. This launch was attended by stakeholders, funders, partners as well as by the cast and production team. Also in attendance were local media as well as other celebrities and VIP guests. This helped to build buzz around the film and drive people to the cinemas to watch the film. Further launches were held in Durban, Cape Town, Soweto and Alexandra. In addition a launch was held in London, to create buzz in Europe.

- **Marketing campaign**

To market the film Heartlines used a traditional marketing approach with print, out of home, radio and cinema advertising as well as digital advertising.

“Inspired by true events. *Beyond the River*, the story of two lives, one journey. Reviewers call it the South African film experience of the year. *Beyond the River* in cinemas from 27th April.”



In addition Heartlines implemented a social media campaign. The marketing campaign included a PR component with coverage received in **The Guardian**, **News24**, **Io!**, **The Good Things Guy**, **Sping** and **Others.org.au**.

- **Use actors as advocates**

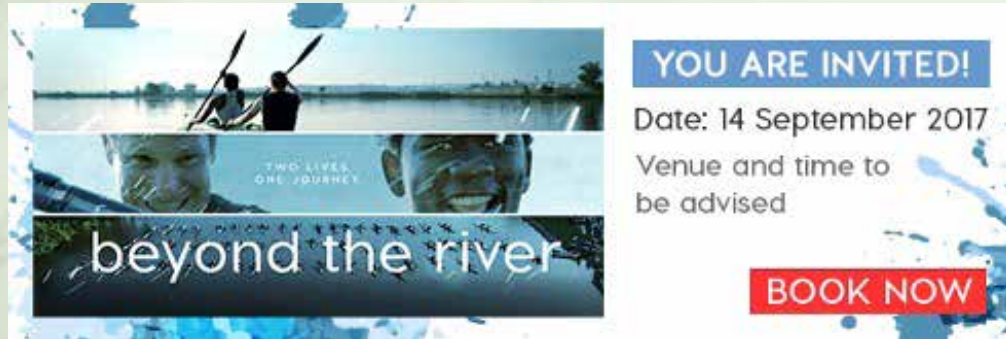
One of the most successful elements of the #WhatsYourStory? campaign was a YouTube video of Israel Makoe, the actor who plays Oupa in the film, telling his story at a facilitated session. In the video he opened up about his name, growing up in Alexandra township in Johannesburg and how being imprisoned changed his life. The video has received 570 785 views and 261 comments. This is an example of how actors can be used to amplify the campaign and drive engagement with the campaign.



The marketing campaign included a PR component with coverage received in *The Guardian*, *News24*, *Io!*, *The Good Things Guy*, *Sping* and *Others.org.au*.

The film received coverage in the South African newspaper *The New Age*.





Save the date for the London film launch of Beyond the River



Street pole advert



Online digital advertising

• **What audiences thought**

Yvonne Ray Spain said: "I saw Beyond the River yesterday. By chance in the audience were about 40 young people from surrounding townships. Their exuberance was as wonderful as the movie. They sighed, laughed, stomped their feet and applauded throughout. The movie moved me... all that we are, inequality indifference, ignorance and slights by the privileged... but transformative. Bravo Garth Japhet who I met during the violence in the late 80s at a crisis office. He was doing his internship at Edendale Hospital. As a movie producer at Heartlines he's reached 1000s more people than he would have as a medic. Don't miss it..."

The film was also shown on international flights to and from South Africa. An American girl who flew KLM from Washington DC said: "I just watched the most brilliant South African film called Beyond the River!"



Email signature



Go beyond... and WIN!

Get the latest info on Beyond the River and STAND A CHANCE TO WIN TICKETS TO THE FILM PREMIERE IN 2017!

**BEYOND THE RIVER**

How to enter:

- Like the BeyondTheRiverMovie page on facebook.
- On our timeline, post the names of the Dusi 2016 K2 winners.
- Share the BeyondTheRiverMovie page on your timeline or invite your friends to like the page.
- Two winners will be selected to join us at the film premiere. See T's & C's on the facebook page.

See full Terms & Conditions in the Notes section on the BeyondTheRiverMovie facebook page.

Competition flyer

ISRAEL MAKOE IS "Oupa"  
"I don't believe in guns, I believe in guys like you"

beyond the river  
TWO LIVES. ONE JOURNEY.

IN CINEMAS 28 April 2017

Character bio that was used as part of the social media campaign, in-store promotion

Stories can conquer fear, you know. They can make the heart bigger. Ivan Otter	An enemy is one whose story we have not heard. Gene Krabbas Hoffman	If you want a happy ending, that depends, of course, on where you stop your story. Goran Visnik	There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you. Maya Angelou

Promotional bookmarks



Branded promotional t-shirts



Instore promotion with a fast-food chain, Nandos

## Lessons learned

### Step 8: Promotion and Marketing



- Include promotion and marketing in your budgets from the beginning. Not having a plan to carry out this process may mean that the strategy will remain in the drawer.
- Advertising aims to engage your target audiences and generate interest in your strategy, before, during and after it is broadcast. The beauty of successful Edutainment is that its popularity opens up new ways to better communicate messages to audiences.
- Use all the resources at your disposal: paid advertising, free press, influencers, launch events. The more popular the Edutainment strategy is, the more powerful its impact will be.
- An advertising campaign must be adjusted to the characteristics of the strategy: if it is national, promote nationally; if it is aimed at closed audiences, do not promote in mass media; if it is aimed at a specific audience, choose the media that this audience consumes.
- Define a period to promote. Choose the media.
- Your initiative is strengthened and supported by partnerships with diverse community stakeholders. Be sure to work with established networks, local media, civil society organizations and others who have similar interests to those of the strategy.



Step 9

# Monitoring & Evaluation

## The EE Route

- 1 - Key decisions
- 2 - Formative research
- 3 - From research to message
- 4 - The story is the message
- 5 - Designing a multimedia strategy
- 6 - Pre-testing
- 7 - Production
- 8 - Promotion
- 9 - Monitoring & Evaluation

“ It was very powerful to get to know people in greater depth; the process makes you vulnerable, as you are sharing, but also going back and rethinking what has affected you and shaped your life. It was a worthwhile experience. ”

- Evaluation, #What's Your Story, South Africa

**Chapter overview:** explores monitoring and evaluation, in order to assess and gauge the results and impact of your initiative



## How successful was your Edutainment?

Evaluation is the last stage of your Edutainment project. But it should not be the last thing you think about, budget for or plan! You need to plan and think about it from the beginning. Evaluation will help you find out how successful your Edutainment actually was.

Right from the beginning, you need to think about what you want to measure. This will probably include:

- The reach and audience (who and how many people engaged with your Edutainment?)
- Audience reception (what was their response?)
- Mechanism of change (how did your Edutainment change or affect people?)
- Impact (what was the impact of your Edutainment on individuals, communities and society?)

It is important to know what worked, and what didn't work as well as you had hoped. Did you meet your intended objectives? This will inform your next project. It is also important information for the funder, who wants to know if their money has been well spent. This chapter gives you a broad overview of evaluation.

### Why evaluate edutainment?

There are four main reasons for undertaking the final evaluation:

- To gauge the impact your Edutainment has had on your audience
- To understand the strengths and weaknesses in order to improve next time
- To enable your current and potential funders to see the value of your work
- To account to your audience and funder for the money that has been spent on the project



## Who should do the evaluation?

The evaluation needs to be done by independent, professional evaluators who are external to your organisation. External evaluators are generally seen to be more objective. This raises the credibility of the findings and improves your chances of being funded again.

An external evaluation also gives you and your various partners a fresh perspective on your project. You may also evaluate how the partnership worked, providing you with ideas on how to work together next time.

You will need to decide the type of evaluation you want to conduct. This is also determined by your available funds. Eight percent of a project should be allocated for evaluation. Before looking at evaluation in more detail, it is useful to understand the difference between monitoring and evaluation.



## Monitoring & evaluation

Monitoring is keeping track of day-to-day programme activities. It is the routine tracking of important information, of programme inputs and outputs. Monitoring also involves regular checking on the status of a programme by comparing actual implementation of activities against a workplan. The routine tracking of programme inputs and outputs can be done through record-keeping, regular reporting, and other modes of observation.

Some specific aspects to monitor include project inputs; project deliverables, products, or outputs; expenditure and general quality control. Monitoring is the continuous routine tracking of programme activities. Evaluation involves a systematic but non-routine tracking of programme outcomes through special methods that will assess the extent to which a programme has achieved its intended objectives. Evaluation asks, for example, what has changed in the lives of individuals and communities as a result of the programme?

## Types of evaluations

- **Process evaluation:** This is an evaluation which focuses on the planning and process of the intervention. A process evaluation looks at the mechanisms or systems through which the desired outcomes are achieved. For example, were the systems and procedures effective? Did the campaign partnership work effectively?
- **Product/Output monitoring and evaluation:** This is an evaluation of the output/products of the intervention. For example, was the quality of materials acceptable? How many materials were distributed? When was the radio programme aired or TV series flighted?
- **Outcome/Impact evaluation:** This is an evaluation of the outcome of the intervention. This includes both your intended and unintended outcomes. You may want to evaluate whether or not you succeeded in the social change objectives you intended. Did you effect change in people's intentions and behaviour? You may want to know who you reached and who you didn't. You may want to see if your Edutainment created public debate or brought about legislative and policy change.
- **Audience reception:** Audience reception refers to how the audience responded to your Edutainment. What did they like or dislike? How did they feel when they watched, listened to or read it? Audience reception often forms part of a product or impact evaluation. It is probably impossible to evaluate every aspect of your Edutainment and the response to it. So evaluators and Edutainment practitioners usually select a few aspects to focus on.

Which aspects you choose will depend on your circumstances. You may decide to evaluate aspects that you found especially difficult, or aspects your funders want to learn about. You may decide that all you need is some basic statistics on your audience size and geographical spread.

- **Some typical evaluation questions**

It is a good idea to think of your evaluation questions right from the beginning. What do you want to know about your Edutainment?

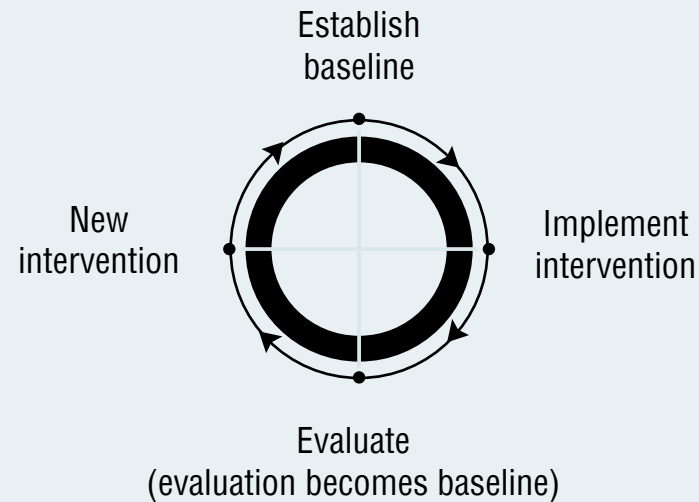
Here are some examples of typical evaluation questions which you may wish to investigate in your final evaluation:

- **The processes leading up to your product.** Were the partnerships as effective as they could have been? How could they be improved?
- **Your reach.** How many and what kind of people did you reach with your intervention?
- **The effectiveness of your Edutainment.** Did the materials have an impact? Did the people who saw or heard the Edutainment understand the messages? Did they remember them? Did they pick up any unintended messages?
- **The outcome.** Did the materials have any impact on the issues you were trying to address?



**Evaluation**  
**Jair Vega**  
Research Director  
Breaking the Silence

### The Evaluation Cycle



- **Evaluating change in people’s behaviour**

Change in behaviour is often the most complex aspect to measure because it is dependent on a wide variety of factors. These include the influence of peers and the effect of the environment in which someone lives. There are so many variables that it is complex to establish a simple relationship between someone’s behaviour change and your Edutainment.

Evaluation is a science and good evaluators know how to control for these variables in order to give a reasonably accurate assessment of the impact of your Edutainment. So choose an evaluator or evaluation company that has experience in this field. Behaviour change is a process. One can measure certain aspects of the process.

- **Getting a baseline**

For evaluation you also need a comparative measure, a benchmark or yardstick. For example, what behaviours existed before you did the Edutainment, and after it was complete? How were things before your Edutainment and how were they afterwards? It is important to plan ahead and think about your evaluation right from the start. This measure is often referred to as a baseline.

## Evaluation methods

Both qualitative and quantitative data are valuable for evaluation.

### Quantitative methods

Quantitative methods are based on the collection of data and interpretation of statistics. Among the methods used for quantitative Edutainment projects are:

- **Measuring reach**

The media in some countries measure these as a matter of course, but you may find this is not the case in your country. Audience ratings or ARs are used to gauge how many people you reach and the demographics of your audience. However, you will need to assess their strengths and limitations in your particular circumstances.

- **Telephone or social media responses**

Radio phone-ins, a helpline or Facebook, SMS, twitter or other social media posts can give you information. How many posts were there on Facebook in response to an episode or issue? How many impressions did your posts achieve? How many call-ins were there following a radio talk show? How many people called the helpline asking about the specific topic your addressed over a particular period of time. This can give you some idea of audience responses to your Edutainment.

An increase in these types of responses during the Edutainment can usually be considered as an indicator of reach. However, its usefulness also depends on what proportion of your target audience has access to a phone or internet connectivity.

- **Use of a service related to your topic**

An increase in people using a service that you promoted in your Edutainment can be viewed as a measure of success. For example, did more people visit the legal advice centre or clinic? Did they give your Edutainment as a reason for their visit? Was using services greater among those exposed to the message?

- **Surveys**

Surveys are used to measure changes in knowledge, social norms and behaviour. They give the most useful information if they are carried out both before and after the Edutainment. However, it can also be helpful to have just one survey after your programme. Statistical analysis of a sample can compare those who accessed the Edutainment compared to those who didn't. Surveys are expensive but provide your project with invaluable information

## Qualitative methods

Qualitative methods give us a deeper understanding of how people engaged with the Edutainment. It does not measure statistics. Qualitative methods dig deeper to find reasons, values and attitudes behind responses. They are particularly useful when members of the target audience themselves make the connection between their own shifts, or new knowledge gained and your Edutainment materials.

Qualitative methods include:

- **In-depth interviews**
- **Observation of target audience viewing/listening to/engaging with the Edutainment materials**
- **Focus group discussions**
- **Organisational analysis or a process of evaluation**

There are also other ways to carry out a qualitative evaluation. For instance, if listeners to your radio Edutainment send in comments on the WhatsApp line, you can analyse what they say. Or if you have a question-and-answer session after a live performance, you can record the audience's questions and comments and analyse them afterwards.

## Combining quantitative and qualitative methods

For complex projects, it is often best to use a variety of methods that complement one another. This is particularly good if you are using multimedia, for example, surveys, audience ratings, focus groups and in-depth interviews.

In conclusion, it is best for your team, right from the beginning, to ask evaluation questions. Some useful questions include:

- **Why do we want to do this evaluation?**
- **Against what criteria or benchmarks will we evaluate our Edutainment?**
- **For whom is the evaluation? (Self, audience, funders, peers)**
- **How complex should it be and what kinds of methods can we use?**
- **What resources do we have?**

Remember especially with a multimedia Edutainment campaign, get expert evaluation research services to help you plan the evaluation.

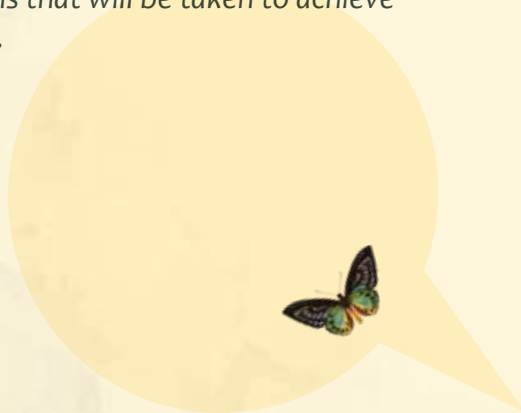




## Colombian Case Study

### Theory of change

*A theory of change explains how a programme or intervention works, which are its diverse components and how are they interconnected: their goals, their expected results, and the actions that will be taken to achieve these.*



The evaluation of Edutainment strategies poses great challenges. For this reason, support was sought from Singizi Consulting Africa, a consultancy with extensive experience in Edutainment and Communication for Social Change strategies who have evaluated Heartlines projects. Singizi was invited to share its experience conducting monitoring and evaluation for Heartlines to help with the development of the monitoring and evaluation plan for Romper el Silencio.

Additionally, we took into account the valuable lessons learned from partner organizations, in this case, BBC Media Action, which generously shared how two of its projects in Myanmar were evaluated: the radio strategy on religious diversity **The Tea Cup Diaries** and the television strategy on conflict and peace Khan Say Kyi (Feel it).

With the support of Singizi, a series of monitoring and evaluation workshops were held. The objective of this workshop, which was attended by the entire Breaking the Silence core group, was to elaborate on the theory of change, based on the findings of the formative research:

- **The definition of the changes expected to be achieved with the Breaking the Silence strategy.**
- **The definition of the activities to be carried out to achieve these changes.**
- **Establishing the indicators of success.**
- **The definition of data collection methodologies.**

This conceptual framework is summarized below.



## Approach

Romper el Silencio aims to contribute to the solution of the problem through an Edutainment strategy, aimed at adolescents and young people between 12 and 18 years old, which will be implemented nationally both in mainstream media and in schools.

Edutainment is an evidence-based communication strategy that leverages the power of stories to engage its audience, generate reflection and dialogue on complex issues and creates the need to change attitudes and behaviors, thus triggering social transformation.

The Edutainment stories are built from rigorous formative research that investigates the characteristics of the audience and determines the messages to be communicated and the components of the communication strategy. Each component of the strategy is pretested to ensure that it communicates the messages, that it is attractive and relevant, and generates identification and empathy.

The components of the strategy are built in a synergistic way, to contribute to reaching the objectives. Likewise, the Edutainment strategy is complemented with social mobilisation, education and knowledge management strategies.

Romper el Silencio identifies with the Truth Commission's goals and its Final Report and is aligned with several of its core elements: the need to strengthen and promote spaces for dialogue, unveil the healing truth to recover the victims' dignity, understand the history of the armed conflict and strengthen critical thinking and the capacity to deal with conflicts in a non-violent manner.



For the strategy, good stories engage people emotionally and have the power to enhance mutual understanding and trust between people. Stories, told from diverse points of view, help to challenge prejudices and stereotypes, reconcile people and communities with each other and reconstruct social cohesion.

### Key activities

A television series for family audiences is the main component of the strategy, complemented by other formats including documentaries, podcasts, radio, educational material, all, based on evidence and inspired by real stories.

The broadcast of the television series on national mainstream channels, public and regional channels, and on-demand platforms is accompanied by a social mobilisation strategy, an educational strategy, a knowledge management strategy and a digital media strategy.

In the first instance, the social mobilisation strategy will be launched, whose objective is to promote the implementation of **Weeks to Break the Silence**, an activity designed and implemented by teachers trained on the strategy, to generate dialogue in the school environment as a priority, using documentaries, podcasts, radio, profiles and monologues of characters, supported by a promotion strategy in social networks.

Subsequently, the television series will be launched, accompanied by the introduction of the educational package in schools and Weeks to Break the Silence outside the classroom, designed by youth groups and other collectives, and a second season of podcasts and documentaries.

The strategy will run for five years, with three television seasons broadcast.



## Expected results

### • Monitoring

- 20 000 people informed about Romper el Silencio's strategy.
- 500 teachers and leaders trained to break the silence in their schools and work spaces.
- 500 Breaking the Silence Weeks in educational institutions and other spaces.
- 10 youth collectives implementing Breaking the Silence Week.
- El Silencio series broadcast on national commercial TV channel, other channels and on-demand platform.
- 2 seasons of podcast series and documentaries broadcast by mass media.
- One Week to Break the Silence online (on social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter).
- Network of partnerships with institutions and communities to promote permanence and extension to other contexts.
- Grow the followers and initiate debates on #BreakingTheSilence on social media.

### • Evaluation

After participating in activities or watching/listening to pieces of the Breaking the Silence strategy, amongst the participants:

- There is greater interest in learning about recent history and understanding the armed conflict among teachers, students and their families.
- There is an increase in the number of young people, teachers and parents seeking truthful information (quality sources) on the history of the armed conflict in Colombia.
- There is a greater appreciation of the truth as part of the process of conflict resolution and reparation for victims.
- There is greater acceptance and capacity to resolve daily conflicts through dialogue.
- There is a more favorable attitude towards transitional and restorative justice processes.
- There is an increased capacity among young people to act as agents of change in peace building.
- There is greater awareness of the importance of dialogue for non-violent conflict resolution.

### • Knowledge management

- Collective construction and sharing of lessons learnt about Breaking the Silence – from the perspective of young people, educational institutions and participating organizations.
- Data building and sharing on the results and impact of the implementation of Romper el Silencio's platform.





## South African Case Study

“ It was very powerful to get to know people in greater depth; the process makes you vulnerable, as you are sharing, but also going back and rethinking what has affected you and shaped your life. It was a worthwhile experience.”

– Evaluation. #WhatsYourStory. South Africa

### Project monitoring

Day-to-day project monitoring on the project included the development of a project plan, regular project status meetings, stakeholder meetings and monthly reporting to ensure that project implementation was progressing successfully. In addition the project team tracked budgets closely to ensure that the project was delivered on budget.

### Measuring impact

Heartlines places a high priority on monitoring and evaluation and as a result Heartlines contracted Singizi Consulting Africa to evaluate the success of the #WhatsYourStory? programme which was implemented from July 2017 to March 2020 in churches and workplaces.

Singizi used a mixed-methods approach to data collection that included a retrospective baseline survey (formative evaluation) and a summative evaluation that gathered data on perceptions of the programme, activities conducted since exposure to the programme, and perceptions of change as a result of the programme; qualitative in-depth interviews; and eight qualitative case studies.





At the broadest level, the key questions that the evaluation sought to address were:

- 1. Can a campaign that encourages people to tell each other their personal stories, in supportive contexts, increase empathy amongst those involved?**
- 2. Does the fostering of greater empathy of individuals for each other in group settings improve cohesion and, therefore, the functioning of the group?**

The evaluation included the development of a programme theory (which included two theories of change) and a monitoring and evaluation framework.

#WhatsYourStory? was designed as an easy-to-implement intervention that could be used in a number of interactive contexts that could easily be adopted and rolled out by others. A key indicator of success, therefore, is whether or not those exposed to #WhatsYourStory? take it up and undertake further WYS-related interventions.

For the formative evaluation, Singizi completed 798 interviews from a total of 2 324 respondents who had been trained at that point. Of the 798 surveys completed, 624 were from churches, 87 were from workplaces, and 87 were from educational or other institutions.

For the summative evaluation, Singizi sampled 910 respondents from a total of 2 536 respondents who participated in the programme. These individuals were all from churches, as the workplace component of the programme had reached its target at that point.

The formative evaluation showed that after being exposed to the “What’s Your Story?” programme 42% of respondents had engaged in further intentional storytelling with others. In comparison to this, in the summative evaluation, a full 80% of respondents reported that they had engaged in further storytelling processes with others.

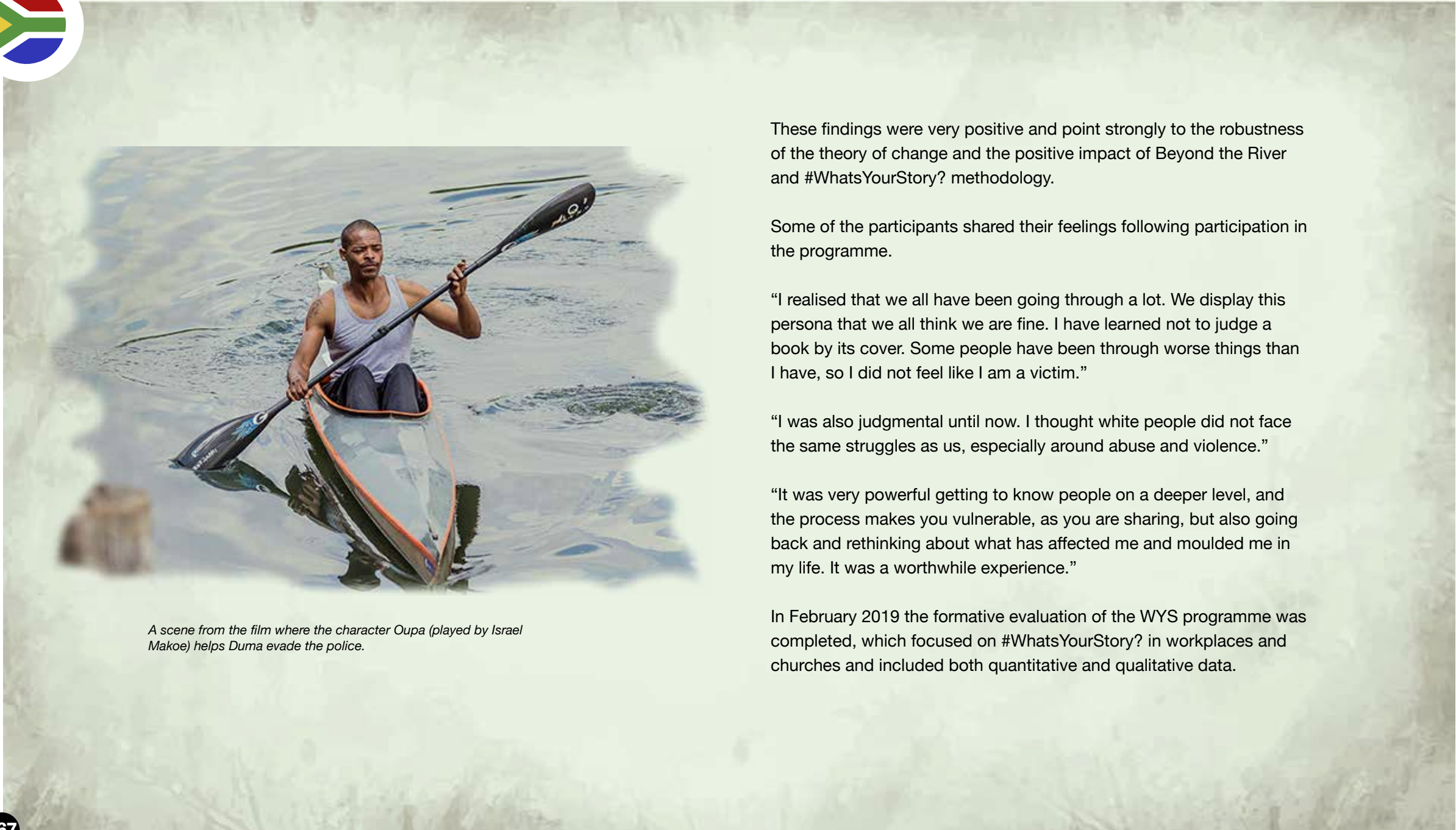
One participant said: “I had a session with my mother immediately after the church session. We both cried. We are from a culture that does not discuss feelings. This was the first time I heard from my mother about her upbringing. I found out things I would never have known and, since then, we have become closer and open and focused on reconnecting as mother and child, although I am now in my forties. I did not realise I longed for that relationship until now. I am also focusing on having a better relationship with my children and being a better parent.”



This increased likelihood of someone adopting the #WhatsYourStory? approach can, in part, be explained by the 'dosage' or the level of exposure that the respondent had to #WhatsYourStory? at the point of being introduced to it.

### Some findings

- The #WhatsYourStory? approach was simple and accessible to people of different races, genders and ages, making it easy for individuals to replicate.
- That the programme theory logic made it easy and likely for individuals to implement it more than once and 'cascade' the approach to other people.
- There was a strong link between the number of times that respondents participated in a #WhatsYourStory? activity and increased levels of empathy.
- In churches, the programme resulted in positive change at the level of the individual, within the church itself, between churches and between churches and the surrounding community.
- Positive changes included: increased confidence, a greater level of curiosity of others, improved trust and better relationships.
- In workplaces, positive changes include improved communication and trust which in turned strengthened teamwork, builds new forms of relationships in the workplace, and supports a culture of trust and respectful communication.



*A scene from the film where the character Oupa (played by Israel Makoe) helps Duma evade the police.*

These findings were very positive and point strongly to the robustness of the theory of change and the positive impact of Beyond the River and #WhatsYourStory? methodology.

Some of the participants shared their feelings following participation in the programme.

“I realised that we all have been going through a lot. We display this persona that we all think we are fine. I have learned not to judge a book by its cover. Some people have been through worse things than I have, so I did not feel like I am a victim.”

“I was also judgmental until now. I thought white people did not face the same struggles as us, especially around abuse and violence.”

“It was very powerful getting to know people on a deeper level, and the process makes you vulnerable, as you are sharing, but also going back and rethinking about what has affected me and moulded me in my life. It was a worthwhile experience.”

In February 2019 the formative evaluation of the WYS programme was completed, which focused on #WhatsYourStory? in workplaces and churches and included both quantitative and qualitative data.

## Lessons learned

### Step 9: Monitoring and evaluation



- Monitoring focuses on how, when and where the planned activities are carried out, as well as who executes them and who benefits from them. Evaluation focuses on what has been achieved.
- There are several possible methodological designs depending on the type of monitoring and evaluation to be conducted and the objectives set. Clearly define your goal from the design stage.
- Monitoring and evaluation require a methodological design which includes the theory of change, the objectives of the evaluation, the methods and instruments, the audiences which will be consulted and the manner in which the results will be reported.
- Monitoring and evaluation can have multiple purposes: to ensure the proper orientation of the process, to gather evidence to make adjustments along the way, to verify achievements and accomplishments, to learn from what has been done, to have evidence to manage new funds, among others.
- It is very important to have a plan to socialize evaluation results that includes:  
1) feedback to stakeholders, 2) feedback to partners, 3) publications in academic journals, 4) feedback to the team for future projects.

# Partners



The Communication  
Initiative  
[www.comminit.com](http://www.comminit.com)

La Iniciativa de  
Comunicación  
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# Partners



## Deutsche Welle Akademie

DW Akademie is Deutsche Welle's center for international media development, journalism training and knowledge transfer. Our projects strengthen the human right to freedom of expression and unhindered access to information. DW Akademie empowers people worldwide to make independent decisions based on reliable facts and constructive dialogue.

DW Akademie is a strategic partner of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. We also receive funding from the Federal Foreign Office and the European Union and are active in approximately 60 developing countries and emerging economies.

## Fundación Imaginario

Fundación Imaginario promotes the innovative use of communication and media to drive social change. Its main activity is the design and implementation of communication strategies for social and behavioural change.

It was created in 2000, and since then has worked hand in hand with its sister organisation, the production company Citurna Producciones, with over 30 years of experience, internationally recognised for its documentaries on drug trafficking, human rights and the promotion of children's television in Colombia; and with The Communication Initiative, a knowledge and advocacy portal on communication for social and behavioral change, with more than 100,000 subscribers worldwide.

Since 2007, Imaginario has worked extensively with strategic allies from the public sector, international cooperation, academia and agencies of the United Nations system in the development of third generation Edutainment strategies, focusing on complex issues of public interest: the promotion of sexual and

reproductive rights of adolescents and young people (Revelados, desde todas las posiciones and Revela2); the promotion of HIV testing in men who have sex with men (Bondage); young women's entrepreneurship (Women Entrepreneurship); and more recently, the armed conflict in Colombia (Romper el Silencio).

Fundación Imaginario has designed and executed a significant number of communication strategies, both locally and regionally. Prior collaborators include foundations such as Rockefeller, Kellogg, Avina, Fundación Plan Colombia and Fundación Corona; with multilateral organisations such as the Inter-American Development Bank, CAN and the European Economic Community; with organisations of the United Nations system, in Colombia and Latin America, such as UNFPA, PAHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, IOM, UN AIDS, and the World Food Program (WFP). Imaginario has also worked with Colombian public entities such as the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Education, the Reconciliation and Normalization Agency, and since 2018 with the Integral System for Peace, specifically the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition.

Their proposals, in addition to striving to increase knowledge, create favorable attitudes and change behaviors, aim to encourage reflection and dialogue through messages immersed in media narratives.

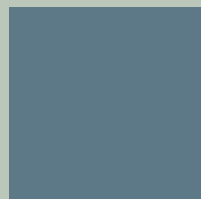
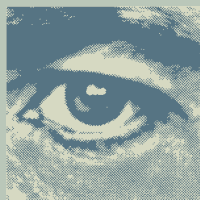
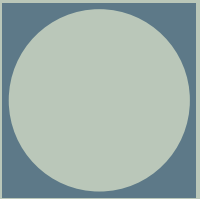
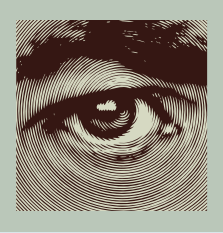
## Heartlines

Heartlines was born in 2002 as a non-profit Centre for Values Promotion, to transform lives through storytelling and entrenching positive values. Its vision is to move people from professed values to lived values –in a bid to encourage South Africa to address pressing societal issues by touching hearts, reinforcing strong morals and helping South Africans to transform their behaviour for the better.

Heartlines has produced several award-winning campaigns such as “8 Weeks. 8 Values. 1 National Conversation”, eight values-based films that went on to win numerous awards, including the Durban International Film Festival and the Banff World Television Awards.

Heartlines also produced the campaign “6 Weeks of Values in Action” and accompanying flagship television mini-series Hopeville, which was later made into a feature-length film. Both went on to win many awards, including a Rose d’Or for best drama and miniseries, two South African Film and Television Awards and best film in the television and video film category at the Fespaco Film Festival.





In 2013 Heartlines released another award-winning feature film, *Nothing for Mahala*, spearheading a national Values & Money campaign to provoke conversations around South African's relationship with money and how it ties in with their personal values.

Their *What's Your Story?* project was launched in 2016 to spark conversations around values and race, embracing difference and nurturing understanding. The supporting film of this project is the drama feature film *Beyond the River*. This guide provides a detailed case study of the conceptualisation of *Beyond the River*, the making of the film and the accompanying *What's Your Story?* campaign.

In 2022, Heartlines launched six short films at the centre of a campaign called *Fathers Matter*. In South Africa, most children grow up in homes without their biological fathers. *Fathers Matter* is a campaign that uses the power of story to support the positive and active role of fathers or men in the lives of children.

The campaign includes 6 anthology films, a website, print resources and social media. It aims at encouraging the active, positive presence of men in the lives of children. The six short films each tackle a different aspect of fatherhood, and the important role that positive and present fathers and father figures, play in the lives of children. The campaign is supported by the national broadcaster, the SABC, which will run complementary programming on its radio and social media platforms.

## **La Iniciativa de Comunicación (CILA) – The Communication Initiative Latin America**

Since 2001, Fundación Imaginario has independently managed The Communication Initiative (CILA), a regional process for Latin America and the Caribbean of The Communication Initiative Networks (CI), an alliance between a strategic group of international development organisations interested in promoting the thinking, practice, policy, resources and evaluation of communication for social and behavioral change. In its 20 years of activities, The Communication Initiative (CI) / The Communication Initiative (CILA) has developed a powerful online platform, a vast network of subscribers around the world and a series of virtual knowledge management services that aim to support those working in communication and development with knowledge, ideas, contacts and exchange of experiences and information to make their work more efficient.

## Acknowledgements

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