STEP 2: PROMOTE VALUES-BASED NARRATIVES

Use human rights as a starting point to move the migration conversation from “the other” to “we” and thereby construct a counter-narrative of “us”.
We are all united in our human experiences of hope, love, family, struggle and courage. Telling stories that draw on our shared values helps connect people. View the video here.

We often think we can sway our audience by simply presenting facts. While evidence is key for informing policy- and decision-making, we cannot rely on evidence alone to influence our audience’s opinions and actions. This is because all human beings assess and make sense of new information based on their lived experiences, their environment, confidence in the messenger, and what they already believe to be true. We filter new information against our values system. This is why two people can have a completely different understanding or emotional reaction to the same fact.

Another common error is to assume our audience has an identical value system to our own. Often organizations create a message that echoes their own values without considering how it will be filtered through their audience’s value system. If we miss this consideration, we could inadvertently trigger or reinforce a negative narrative on migration. Adapting our message to focus on shared values also helps us open conversations and find common ground.

If our goal is to sway our audience, we need to:

- Define our audience;
- Understand our own and our audience’s values systems;
- Identify our shared values.

The overlap between our values and our audience’s values forms the basis for messaging that resonates and can achieve common goals. Focusing on what we have in common, rather than what we may disagree on, is how we can open space for conversation and enable change.

For example, prior to running the local campaign #TogetherHuman in Germany, JUMA worked with the International Centre for Policy Advocacy to identify the shared values held with their target audience, such as nature, team work, youth and future, community and tradition. You can read more about their campaign here.

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1 To learn more about the nuance in narrative change messaging aimed at public audiences versus policymakers please see the section here.
In order to create effective messaging, we need to identify our target audience and adapt our messaging accordingly. In our personal lives, we do this automatically. We change the way we convey an identical bit of information to a friend, a family member or a colleague depending on what we believe might resonate the most with them.

We should consider a similar approach when we communicate about migration. Ask yourself, is your audience in your local area? Is it comprised of the general public or policymakers? What is their age group, gender and other defining qualities? What do you know about your audience's existing attitudes towards migration?

For example, your audience might be women and LGBTI persons living in urban areas who are already “social justice seekers”. Your audience might be municipal level policymakers. Your audience could be people aged 35 years and younger, who are skeptical of migration.

The more we know about our specific audience the more we can understand their value system and create messages that resonate and inspire positive action. For more tools that can be helpful in defining your target audience, see the section on additional tools and methodologies below.²

Who is your audience? Be as specific as possible. Consider geographic area, age range, possible attitudes and viewpoints on migration and other key factors.

² To learn more about the nuance in narrative change messaging aimed at public audiences versus policymakers please see the section here.
UN Human Rights asked experts why it is important to base our communications on migration on shared values. Watch the video here.

Activity: Human Rights Values

Building a narrative from a human rights-based starting point will lead to messaging that emphasizes the powerful bonds created by our common humanity.

We might be surprised at how many of our values within the human rights framework – those of humanity, dignity, justice and equality – are shared and deeply embedded in all societies.

Individually or in a group, respond to the following question: what do we need as human beings to flourish? Consider you and your own family’s needs in order to lead dignified and fulfilled lives. List at least ten words here.
Next, look at the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** Summary:

- Article 1: Right to Equality
- Article 2: Freedom from Discrimination
- Article 3: Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security
- Article 4: Freedom from Slavery
- Article 5: Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment
- Article 6: Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law
- Article 7: Right to Equality before the Law
- Article 8: Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal
- Article 9: Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile
- Article 10: Right to Fair Public Hearing
- Article 11: Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty
- Article 12: Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence
- Article 13: Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country
- Article 14: Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution
- Article 15: Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It
- Article 16: Right to Marriage and Family
- Article 17: Right to Own Property
- Article 18: Freedom of Belief and Religion
- Article 19: Freedom of Opinion and Information
- Article 20: Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association
- Article 21: Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections
- Article 22: Right to Social Security
- Article 23: Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions
- Article 24: Right to Rest and Leisure
- Article 25: Right to Adequate Living Standard
- Article 26: Right to Education
- Article 27: Right to Cultural Life
- Article 28: Right to a social and international order in which these rights and freedoms can be fully realized
Discuss or write your response to the following questions:

- Are there values you listed that overlap with specific human rights listed?
- Are there any rights missing (values you have listed not included in the summary list of human rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)?
- Are there values you missed that you would like to add (that are identified as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)?

Human rights law and standards, contained in the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (1948) represent at their most fundamental level a broad consensus to uphold the inherent dignity and worth of each human person, without distinction as to migration status or nationality, and to protect those who are most marginalized and vulnerable to harm. A human rights-based approach to migration narratives will therefore focus on empathy and compassion, rather than on pity or charity. It is consciously linked to an international framework of legally guaranteed rights and entitlements.

While human rights language may alienate some, focusing on the underlying common values can help strengthen support for the human rights framework and the realization of everyone’s rights.
It is important to remember that almost everyone believes their values are positive. It can be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that people with whom we disagree have negative values because we see them in opposition to our own. This approach would, however, be counterproductive to our hope-based vision and connecting with our audience. By understanding our audience’s positive values and focusing on the values we share, we can better reach our audience.

The next step is to map our values. Our values should reflect and uphold the vision of the world we want to see. From the human rights values exercise above, you might find many of your values are consistent with human rights principles.

To continue understanding our own values, complete the Human Rights-Based Values Mapping activity:

**Activity: Human Rights-Based Values Mapping**

This exercise will help you identify both your own and your audience’s values. It is important to understand your own values first. Therefore, we recommend completing the exercise for your own values first.

Many of these values overlap with the principles reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The exercise is based on similar value mapping exercises and you can adapt it to include additional values.

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3 [https://www.narrativechange.org/toolkit/12-positive-value-map](https://www.narrativechange.org/toolkit/12-positive-value-map)
Step 1: Select Values

Read the list of values below. Which values do you hold? Write down each value that applies. If there are values you hold that are not included on this list be sure to include these as well.

Adaptability  Acceptance  Accountability
Achievement  Advocacy  Ambition
Authority  Autonomy  Balance
Care  Collaboration  Commitment
Community  Compassion  Connection
Cooperation  Creativity  Culture
Dedication  Dependability  Dignity
Discipline  Diversity  Education
Entrepreneurship  Empathy  Employment
Equality  Faith  Family
Financial Gain  Free Speech  Freedom
Friendship  Fun  Future
Generosity  Growth  Happiness
Health  Home  Honesty
Humor  Inclusivity  Innovation
Institutions  Integrity  Intelligence
Improvement  Justice  Kindness
Knowledge  Leadership  Leisure
Liberty  Life  Love
Loyalty  Marriage  Nationality
Nature/Environment  Optimism  Openness
Opportunity  Participation  Peace
Personal fulfillment  Power  Privacy
Professionalism  Purpose  Reliability
Resilience  Resourcefulness  Respect
Responsibility  Safety  Security
Selflessness  Service  Social Security
Social cohesion  Spirituality  Stability
Standard of Living  Status  Teamwork
Tolerance  Traditionalism  Trust
Understanding  Usefulnes  Wealth
Well-being  Welcoming  Wisdom
Work Ethic

List your values in the space provided below.
Step 2: Group Values

Next, group the similar values together in a way that seems logical to you. Which values are similar? Create five value groupings as per the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Liberty</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Selflessness</td>
<td>Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Traditionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Authority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethic</td>
<td>Well-being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, do this with your own values:
Step 3: Select Primary Values

From each column, select one value that best represents the group of values. Please see the example below. The primary value is highlighted in bold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Liberty</th>
<th><strong>Service</strong></th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethic</td>
<td>Well-being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, do this for your own values.
Understanding Audience Values

Now that we have articulated our own values, how do we understand our audience’s values?

To identify your audience’s values, you can either infer based on what you currently know about your audience, or you can use tools outlined in the Additional Methodology section, including hosting a focus group, online and personal surveys, social listening tools or consulting existing research on audience values.

Another way to identify your audience’s values is to look at core arguments that resonate with your audience and try to understand the values that are at the center of these statements. Remember that people’s reservations about migration may be related to other concerns. For example, skepticism about migrants and migration may be due to your audience’s worries about job scarcity or community cohesion.

Think of your target audience: what are some of their opinions on migration? If nothing comes to mind, you can practice with the sample statement below:

I believe in education, hard work and making our community safe. We need to create a secure country where our children have job opportunities and stability.

Using the Human Rights-Based Values Mapping exercise, identify which values underpin the sample statement or your audience’s specific views on migration.

Remember, everyone believes their values are positive. This might be difficult to see if you do not agree with someone. However, using empathy enables us to understand we have more values in common than what we initially realized.
What human rights underpin the statement? Add any relevant human rights values to your map.
Identify Shared Values

Following the values mapping, identify openings where your values overlap with those of your audience.

List the priority values you have identified for yourself and your target audience, highlighting your shared values. If you find you do not have an exact fit, go back to your broader lists and think about which values are related and likely to be shared.4

List priority values you share with your audience.

Keep these values with you. We will build on these in the next step: The Power of Storytelling.

4 See for example, additional advice at: https://valuesandframes.org/resources/CCF_workshop_resource_values_surveys_and_maps.pdf
There are many additional tools to understand your audience’s values. Depending on your interest, you might want to engage one of the following methods. These are also covered in Step 7: Do No Harm.

**Focus Groups:**

Focus groups can help you better understand your audience’s values. Your focus group should represent your wider audience. Studying the focus group’s reactions to a message or issue, helps you better understand a larger audience’s values, reactions and viewpoints. For example, if your objective is to create messaging that resonates with women in their 40s from a specific district your focus group should be comprised of women in their 40s from this district.

Focus groups vary in terms of size but a good rule of thumb is around 10 – 12 people. You can carry out the values mapping activity in your focus group to gain insight to your audience’s values.

For example, More in Common have conducted studies of public attitudes in several European countries and the United States, mapping people according to their values and core beliefs. They used focus groups, as well as other quantitative and qualitative research methods to build an understanding of the populations groups or “segments”. Their research has been used for a range of initiatives and by various actors to counter polarization and “us vs. them” narratives by targeting middle segments, who often make up nearly half the population.

**Online and In Person Surveys**

Surveys are a great way to understand your audience’s values. Surveys can be conducted in person or online. Many groups rely on random sample surveys with large groups of people. Often, an external consultant or company will aggregate data from surveying hundreds or thousands of people representing a target audience. However, you can also produce surveys at a smaller scale by using free and readily available online survey tools or delivering them in person. Consider which option is best for you given your time, resources and needs.

For example, Hope Not Hate conducted the largest ever national consultation on immigration in the UK through a combination of an online survey hosted on Hope Not Hate’s website, a nationally representative survey and through researchers using an in person discussion guide in 60 towns and cities. The resulting report, National Conversation on Immigration, detailed understanding of values and opinions in the UK around migration. Read the report and an article written by one of the report’s authors Rosie Carter.
Love Frankie, a research and social impact organization based in Thailand, uses a combination of online surveys, focus groups, interviews and desk research to provide information to organizations promoting human rights causes. In partnership with USAID/Winrock, Love Frankie is examining public attitudes towards migrants and migration across Thailand.

Social Listening

Social listening helps you analyze narrative salience of your issue, the tone or so-called “social sentiment” of the conversation online. For example, a social listening exercise of the online conversation around migration within your target audience can help you better map their value systems.

Research

Many resources and studies have been commissioned to better understand people’s values and attitudes in relation to migration. These can provide national, district or community level findings.

For reference, you can view samples of existing research below:

- Afrobarometer
- Common Cause Foundation
- Frameworks Institute
- Human Science Research Council
- Hope Not Hate
- International Labour Organization
- Migration Policy Group
- More in Common
- ODI
- Pew Research
- Scanlon Foundation
All human beings assess and make sense of new information based on their lived experiences, their environment, confidence in the messenger, and what they already believe to be true.

The overlap between our values and our audience’s values forms the basis for messaging that resonates and can achieve common goals.

Values that underpin the human rights framework – those of humanity, dignity, justice and equality – are deeply embedded in all societies and form a strong basis for messaging.

The next time you speak about migration with someone or on social media, focus on your shared values. How does this impact the discussion?

Tell us which shared values are key in your context using the hashtag #StandUp4Migrants.

In the next step, find out how to reach your audience through diverse storytelling methods grounded in shared values.