

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”.



Moving from The Other to We

💡 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 actions¹.

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.

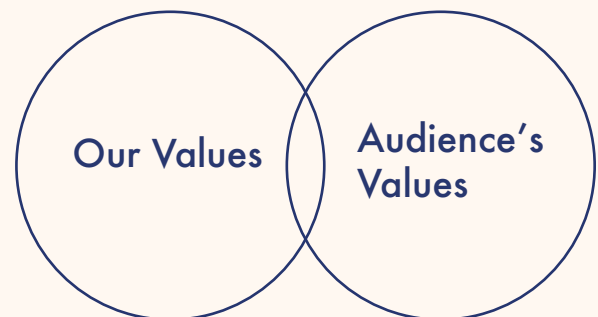
Another common error is to assume our audience has an identical value system to our own. Often organizations create a message that echoes their own values without considering how it will be filtered through their audience's value system. If we miss this consideration, we could inadvertently trigger or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

¹ To learn more about the nuance in narrative change messaging aimed at public audiences versus policymakers please see the section [here](#).

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.



Shared Values: Basis for Messaging

💡 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](#).

Define your Target Audience

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.

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² To learn more about the nuance in narrative change messaging aimed at public audiences versus policymakers please see the section [here](#).

Understanding Value Systems

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.

Positive Values

It is important to remember that almost everyone believes their values are positive.³ 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](https://www.narrativechange.org/toolkit/12-positive-value-map) exercises and you can adapt it to include additional values.




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

Accountability	Home	Liberty	Service	Security
Responsibility	Family	Freedom	Selflessness	Safety
Professionalism	Marriage	Privacy	Community	Traditionalism
Reliability	Love		Compassion	Authority
Commitment	Life			
Work Ethic	Well-being			

-  Next, do this with your own values:

[illegible]

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.

Accountability	Home	Liberty	Service	Security
Responsibility	Family	Freedom	Selflessness	Safety
Professionalism	Marriage	Privacy	Community	Traditionalism
Reliability	Love		Compassion	Authority
Commitment	Life			
Work Ethic	Well-being			

-  Next, do this for your own values.

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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.



Audience Values Mapping



Audience Values Map:

Complete the Values Mapping exercise for your target audience’s values. By the end of the exercise, you should have grouped and prioritized five positive values of your target audience.



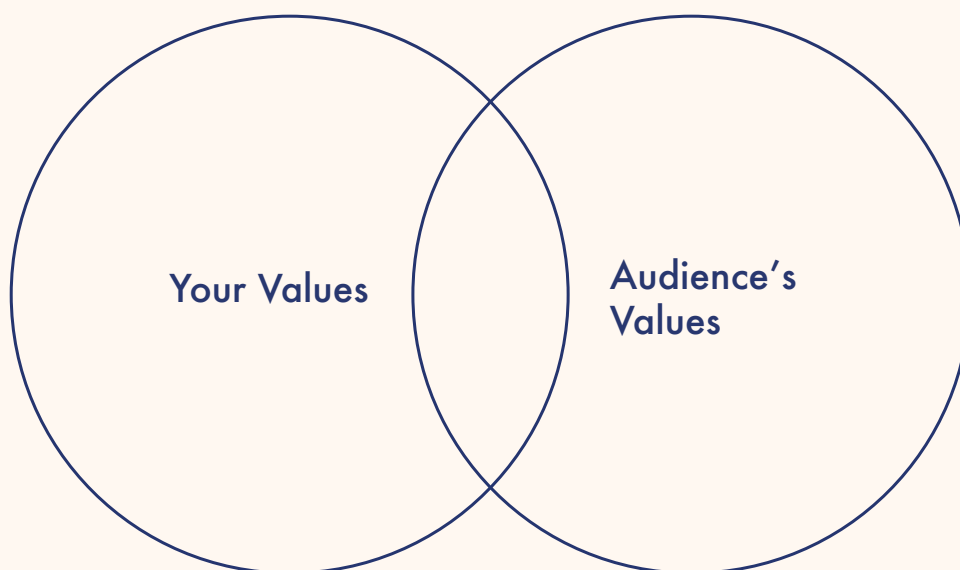
What human rights underpin the statement? Add any relevant human rights values to your map.

Human Rights Values

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



Shared Values: Basis for Messaging



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

Additional Tools & Methodologies

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](#)



Summary

- 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.



Take Action

- 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.