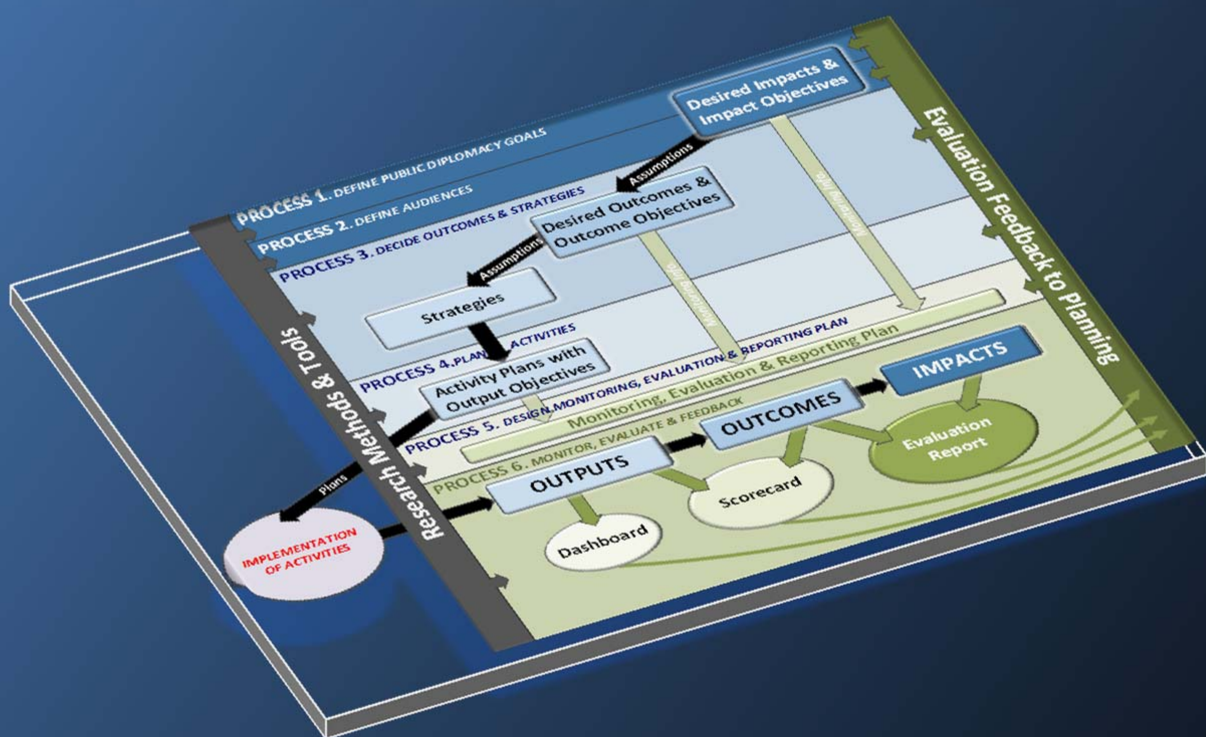
A Framework for the Strategic Planning & Evaluation of Public Diplomacy



Developed by NATO's Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre

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A FRAMEWORK FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING & EVALUATION OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

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FOREWORD

This handbook presents a framework for the strategic planning and evaluation of public diplomacy that was originally produced for NATO's Public Diplomacy Division (PDD) by NATO's Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC). The framework was developed to help the PDD to better evaluate and enhance the impact of its public diplomacy activities.

During development of the framework, JALLC carried out extensive research into a variety of public diplomacy, public relations, international development, and communication evaluation concepts, methods and tools. JALLC was unable to find any existing framework suitable to meet the PDD's requirements during this research, so JALLC created its own research-based and peer-reviewed comprehensive framework, tailored to meet PDD requirements.

JALLC believes a generic version of the PDD framework could be of interest to the wider public diplomacy community who are seeking an approach for the strategic planning and evaluation of their activities. Therefore, JALLC offers a generic version of the framework in this handbook. Although this practitioner's handbook is designed to support public diplomacy planning and evaluation, it is also applicable to planning and evaluation of other aspects of public affairs.

This handbook has two purposes. Its first purpose is to provide an understanding to the reader of what the framework is and of how the framework can help to better assess the impact of public diplomacy activities. It does this by offering in Chapter 1 a brief description of the framework and the theoretical underpinnings that the framework is built upon.

The second purpose of this handbook is to describe the methodology for using the framework to practitioners who are tasked to carry out its planning and evaluation processes. The majority of the handbook is devoted to this purpose. To meet this purpose it includes step-by-step instructions for planning public diplomacy activities and their evaluation (Chapter 2), implementing monitoring and evaluation (Chapter 3), an overview of research methods that can be employed to support monitoring, evaluation and reporting (Chapter 4), example applications of the framework to typical public diplomacy programmes (Chapter 5), worksheets to support the work needed to conduct and support evaluation, and a selection of possible suppliers of research services and tools.

It is the author's intent that this handbook is read in its entirety so that the reader gets a comprehensive explanation of the Framework and the processes it contains. The Framework has been designed to be used by public diplomacy practitioners and as such assumes some pre-knowledge of planning and evaluating public diplomacy and communication activities. This handbook does not give any guidance on the selection or implementation of public diplomacy activities.

Some suppliers of research tools are mentioned in this handbook to illustrate the types of services that are available. The inclusion of these suppliers is not intended as an endorsement of their services nor a recommendation to use them.

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1

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FRAMEWORK:
ESSENTIAL TERMINOLOGY & THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

INTRODUCTION

In order to successfully apply the framework for the strategic planning and evaluation of public diplomacy presented in this handbook (hereafter *the Framework*), it is helpful to understand the fundamental concepts on which it is based. This chapter provides a general explanation of what a public diplomacy evaluation framework is, why it is used, the terminology that is necessary to describe and understand the Framework, the theoretical foundation upon which it is based and an overview of the Framework itself.

A Public Diplomacy Evaluation Framework

Box 1: Public Diplomacy Evaluation Framework

A theoretical construct for a total approach to public diplomacy evaluation comprised of:

- A theoretical foundation for understanding the relationships among goals, public diplomacy activities, intended results and actual results;
- An evaluation methodology that includes a process for feeding evaluation findings into planning;
- Procedures necessary to execute the evaluation methodology; and
- A selection of research methods and tools used to accomplish monitoring and evaluation.

A framework is used to enable practitioners to evaluate their public diplomacy activities so that they may:

- More objectively understand the effectiveness and impact of their public diplomacy activities;
- Enhance the selection and implementation of future public diplomacy activities; and,
- Continually increase their understanding of the link between their organizational goals and public diplomacy activities.

There are many significant challenges to evaluating the impact of public diplomacy which may explain why very few organizations have achieved progress or success in this area. The most significant of these challenges[1] relate to:

- Causality: the difficulty of attributing changes in target audience knowledge, attitudes and behaviour to public diplomacy activities. People form their opinions and attitudes from a complex variety of sources over a long period of time, which means the public diplomacy activities being evaluated may only represent a small contribution to the target audience's thought and behaviour patterns.
- Resource limitations: the difficulty of achieving meaningful evaluations with a limited budget and staff.
- Organizational culture: in many organizations, practitioners are educated in communications but not evaluation, which may lead to work cultures that do not value evaluation.

[1] Identified by our research.

Terminology Used to Describe the Framework in this Handbook

Terms used in this handbook have specific meanings in the context of public diplomacy. As the use of these terms may be slightly different to their dictionary definitions, the reader is strongly encouraged to read Box 2 which defines the most common terms in this handbook. We have made every effort to use the terms defined in Box 2 only in the sense as defined.

Framework terms are used in this book in a public diplomacy context and their meanings treated similarly. For example, in this handbook, the terms *strategy* and *activity* mean *public diplomacy strategy* and *public diplomacy activity*.

Box 2: Definition of Key Framework Terms

In this handbook, the terms set out below are used in the context of public diplomacy unless otherwise stated.

Activities. The methods, tools, instruments and programmes used to engage and communicate with publics to influence their attitudes and behaviours.

Desired Impact. An impact that an organization hopes to achieve in support of a goal. Desired impacts in this Framework should mostly be defined in terms of *support* and individual or organizational *behaviour*, i.e. a significant and concrete change as a result of activities. Desired impacts are reached by achieving a series of desired outcomes.

Desired Outcome. An outcome that the organization hopes to realize to contribute towards achieving a desired impact and its associated organizational goal. In the Framework, outcomes mostly relate to *awareness, knowledge and understanding* of issues and topics linked to the goals.

Evaluation. The ongoing systematic and objective assessment of the progress of an activity or programme towards achieving intended results; including the effects on target audience(s) and the causal relationship between strategies and their results. It is equivalent to the way military bodies use the term *assessment*.

Goal. An intended result the organization seeks to achieve in its efforts to encourage public understanding of, and active support for, the aims of that organization. Goals are long-term and should only change if there is a change in the strategic direction of the organization.

Impact. An organizational, community, and/or system level effect resulting from activities and programmes. An impact should relate to a goal such as increased levels of support or demonstration of desired behaviour in the target audience.

Key Performance Indicator (KPI). Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement against a planned objective. It is used to observe progress toward objectives and goals and to measure actual results compared to expected results.

Logic Model. A systematic and visual way to present the relationships between the resources an organization has to operate with, the activities the organization plans and the results the organization hopes to achieve.

Macro- and Micro-. The Framework is designed to evaluate the medium- and long-term effects (outcomes and impacts) of strategies in relation to achieving organization goals. This full use of the Framework is referred to as a *macro* implementation. In some cases, a shorter-term evaluation of a particular strategy or activity is required, which involves evaluating the outputs and the short-term outcomes. This limited scope evaluation is referred to as a *micro* implementation of the Framework.

Monitoring. Data collection on specified KPIs to provide metrics regarding the extent of progress and the likely achievement of objectives.

Objective. A statement of aim associated with an intended result that incorporates KPIs and abides by the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) principles.

Box 2: Definition of Key Framework Terms (continued)

Output. The immediate and direct result from activities. Usually described in terms of participation level, audience reach, audience satisfaction, number of conferences or press releases, etc. Indicates if an activity or programme was delivered as intended from planning. The effects of these outputs are outcomes. Military bodies use the term Measure of Performance (MoP) in a similar way to the civilian usage of an Output KPI.

Outcome. The effect resulting from outputs of one or more activities. It is similar in nature to an impact but is of shorter-term and more closely related to the activities' outputs. An outcome generally relates to awareness, knowledge and understanding of issues and topics linked to the organizational goals. Military bodies use the term Measure of Effectiveness (MoE) in a similar way to the civilian usage of an Outcome KPI.

Planned Outputs. The direct results expected to occur from activities.

Public Diplomacy. Communications and outreach efforts responsible for promoting awareness of and building understanding and support for the organization's rational, policies, operations and activities.

Research Question. The clear, focused, concise, and complex question around which research is centred. It should address a specific issue that is important for evaluation.

Strategy. A plan outlining a specific mix of activity or programme types to achieve a desired outcome or desired impact.

Results. Outputs, outcomes and impacts of strategies and activities.

Target Audience. A specific and defined group or persons to whom public diplomacy activities are directed; those people whom the organization intends to influence.

Theory of Change. The assumed causal pathway specifying the changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that the individuals in a target audience need to exhibit for goals to be achieved. In the Framework,0 theory of change is shown by planned outputs, desired outcomes and desired impacts and the planning assumptions connecting them.

Theoretical Foundation of the Framework

The Framework is founded on two closely related theoretical concepts—the logic model and the theory of change—widely employed by a number of organizations[2] in designing the planning and evaluation of their activities, including activities in the wider communication and public relations field.

The Logic Model

Logic models are used in many disciplines and are the basis for all of the public relations, public affairs, and public diplomacy evaluation models which were researched. In the context of public diplomacy, a logic model attempts to show the logical relationship between cause and effect. Figure 1 shows the cause is the activity and the effects are the outputs, outcomes and impacts. Outputs are a direct consequence of activities (such as a conference). Outcomes are the changes in awareness and understanding that are needed to cause impacts. Impacts are the changes in attitudes, support, and behaviours that the organization intends to achieve. A series of outcomes may be necessary to achieve a single impact, which is usually considered to be an observable change in behaviour.

[2] In particular, our logic model is heavily influenced by the Kellogg Foundation's Logic Model Development Guide, the British Council's logic model as described by Colin M. Wilding, Measuring the Effectiveness of Public Diplomacy: the UK Approach, and the www.theoryofchange.org website.

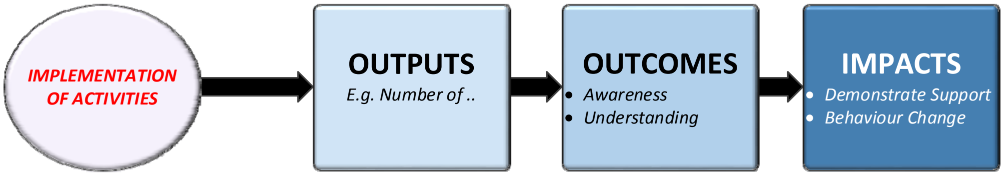

Figure 1: Logic Model

The above described logical flow may be too simplistic in practice as it is often difficult to establish a direct causal relationship between an activity and an impact. Also, the results may be obscured or changed by a single high-impact, unanticipated event. Nevertheless, the logic model is a widely accepted methodology for communications planning and evaluation.

The Theory of Change

The theory of change is a valuable planning methodology that works backwards through a logic model from a statement of the desired impact that the organization plans to achieve through one or more desired outcomes that need to be achieved before the impact can happen, to the outputs that should be planned to reach the desired outcomes. The theory of change allows practitioners to select strategies and activities, the planned outputs of which are logically expected to contribute to the ultimate, desired impact.

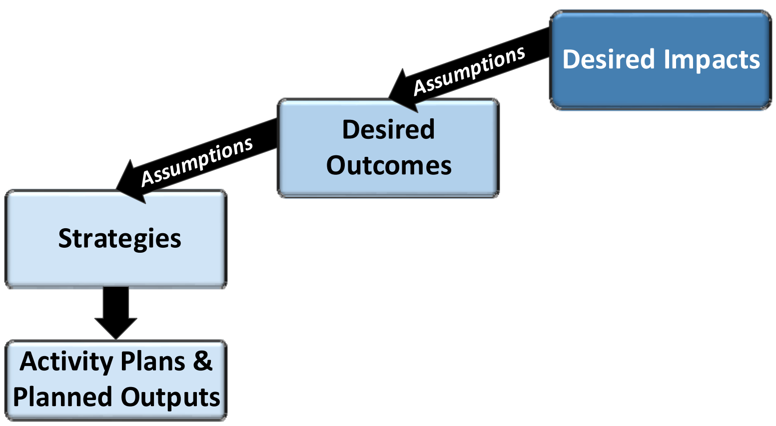

Figure 2: Theory of Change

The theory of change used in the Framework can be thought of as an outcomes-focused planning approach that poses questions to practitioners such as:

- What lasting outcome or impact is needed to achieve goals?
- What behaviours in our target audiences will indicate the impact has happened?
- What do target audiences need to know and understand to give their support to the organization?
- What "experiences" caused by the outputs of activities would contribute to changes in knowledge and understanding?
- What inputs are necessary to resource activities which will cause the right experiences?

By combining a practitioner's knowledge and experience with a sound understanding of the target audience, creative thinking and intuition, a well laid out hierarchy of logically linked, desired outcomes and desired impacts can be developed.

The Framework

Framework Overview

The Framework is designed to link the theory of change planning process to the outputs, outcomes and impacts actually achieved by the selected activities. This link is provided by the process of evaluation where actual results are measured and compared to the planned results to determine how effective the activities were and how well the causal relationships assumed by the practitioner accounted for the observed changes. Evaluations of outputs, outcomes, and impacts feed back into the planning cycle to enhance public diplomacy activity and organizational effectiveness.

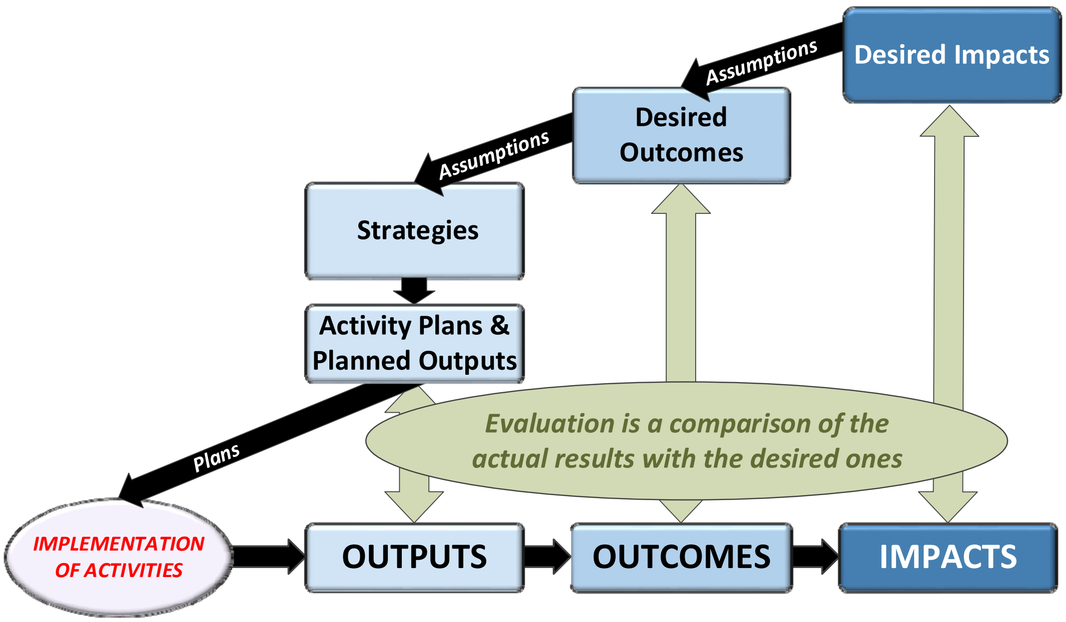

Figure 3: Evaluation provides the link between the Logic Model and the Theory of Change.

In Figure 3, the theory of change is reflected in the *diagonal* black arrows linking the products of each of the planning processes, representing the assumptions that describe the anticipated causal links between goals and activities. The *horizontal* black arrows represent the causal links of the logic model between activities and outcome/impacts that can be inferred from what is actually observed.

The Framework is based on the idea that the diagonal black arrows—planning assumptions—should mirror the corresponding black horizontal forward arrows—real-world results from implementation. Evaluation will test this by comparing actual outputs, outcomes, and impacts against planned outputs, desired outcomes and desired impacts. If an anomaly is found, then there are two courses of action (or a combination of both), one on the micro-level and one on the macro-level:

- Output Evaluation (Micro-Level). If outputs do not match that which was intended by the activity, the theory of change cannot be tested at all. In other words: activities are not being done right. Activities should be adjusted to better deliver the desired outputs. This output evaluation is termed a *micro-level* evaluation as it affects a particular strategy or activity in the shorter term.

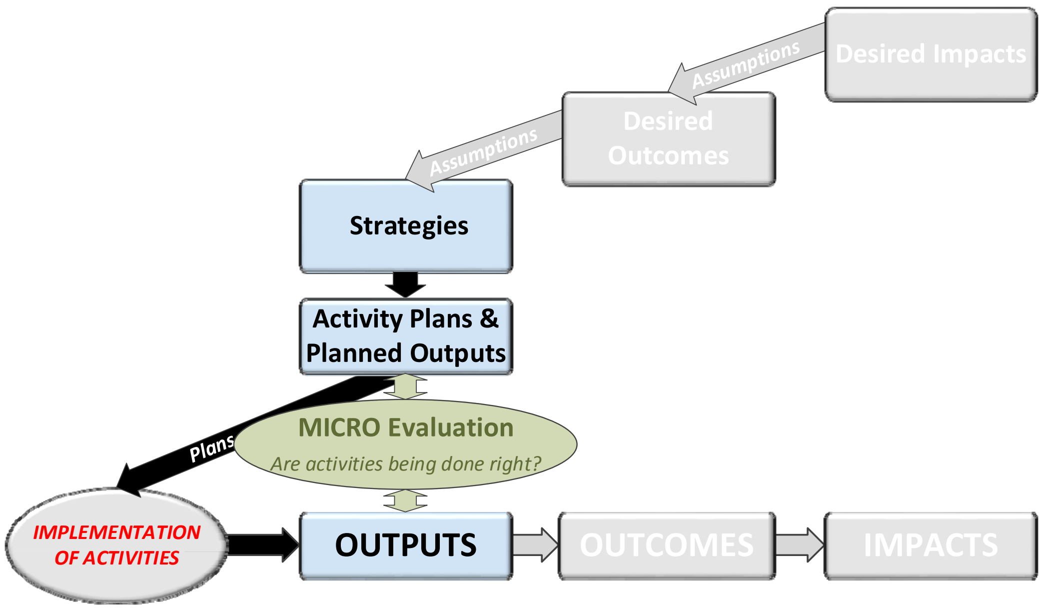

Figure 4: Micro Evaluation in the Framework

- Impact/Outcome Evaluation (Macro-Level). If outputs match that which was intended by the activity, but actual impacts/outcomes do not match desired impacts/outcomes, this indicates that the planning assumptions linking impacts and outcomes with outputs were incorrect. In other words: the right activities are not being done. This impact/outcome evaluation is termed a *macro-level evaluation* that should be conducted as appropriate according to the impact/outcome objectives. The timing will depend on the nature of the impact; evaluating the impact of a major conference could be a one-off medium-timeframe example, whereas an ongoing public diplomacy programme may require an annual evaluation.

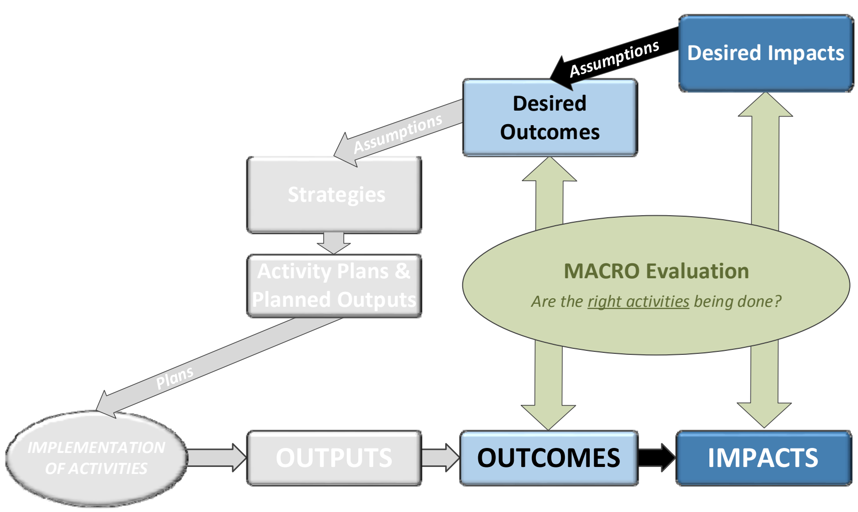

Figure 5: Macro Evaluation in the Framework

Framework Processes

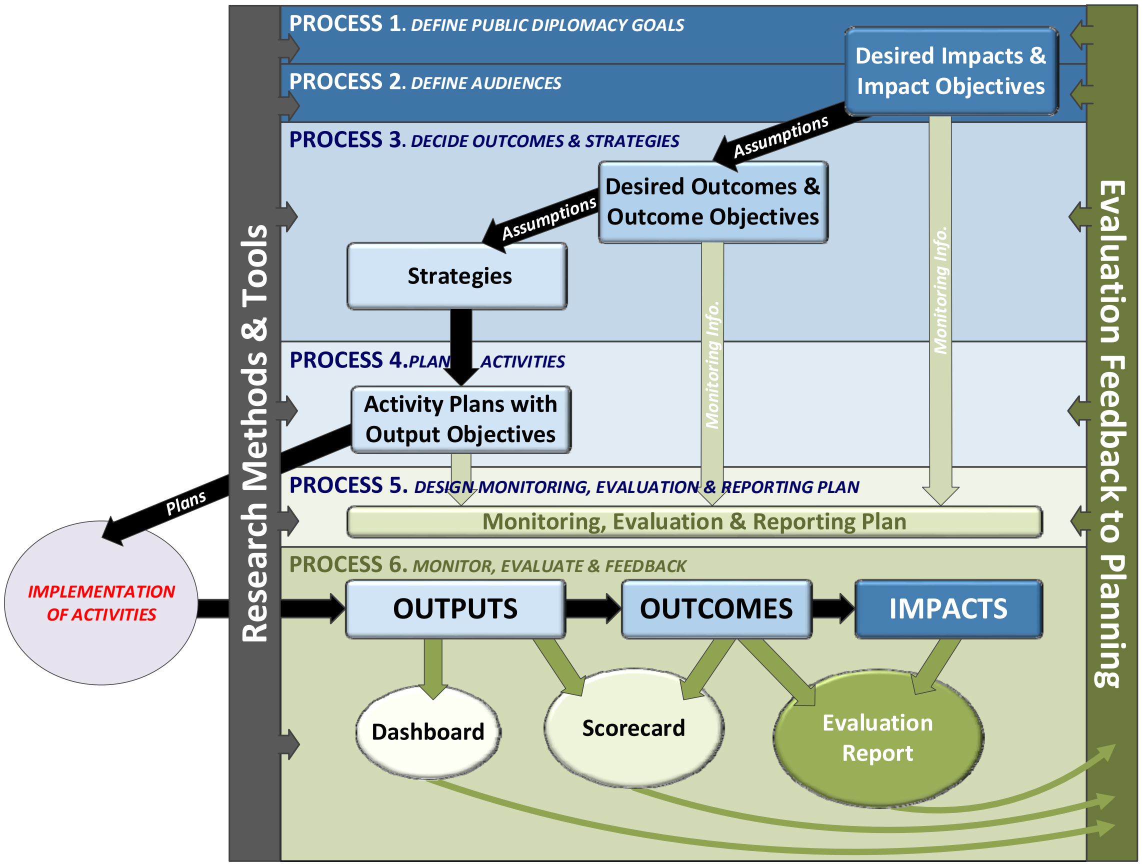

Figure 6: The Complete Framework.

There are six distinct processes in the Framework—five planning processes followed by a sixth process for the monitoring and evaluation of the actual results.

1. Define Public Diplomacy Goals
2. Define Audiences
3. Decide Outcomes and Strategies
4. Plan Activities
5. Design Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan
6. Monitor, Evaluate and Feed Back

The first four processes relate to how to plan in a manner that will allow for evaluation. The fifth is the actual planning of the evaluation itself. These five planning processes result in two plans:

- A plan of activities, which is designed to support strategies for achieving desired impacts and desired outcomes; and,
- A monitoring and evaluation data collection plan, which is built from the KPIs and research questions that the theory of change suggests will indicate achievement of desired impacts and desired outcomes.

These two plans describe a combination of what the organization is setting out to achieve, which activities will be implemented and also, very importantly, how the resulting outcomes and impacts will be monitored and evaluated.

The sixth process for monitoring and evaluation of the results occurs during and after implementation of activities and is used to determine if the activities generated the planned outputs and to what extent the desired outcomes and desired impacts are in evidence. The sixth process results in three evaluation products representing three levels of reporting:

- A dashboard, which shows the monitoring of outputs and is a short-term reporting method. Outcome indicators usually change over a longer time period;
- A scorecard, which will display a periodic set of results showing progress towards meeting outcome objectives; and,
- An evaluation report, which takes a balanced, longer-term view of all relevant results and aims to show what meaningful changes have occurred, how they might be linked to activities. The report judges whether the objectives have been reached, and if they are reached effectively and efficiently.

The different types of reporting allow feedback to inform the planning processes and to restart the cycle[3].

Since the Framework is established on a theoretical construct based on assumptions, care must be taken to undertake review, revision and continual improvement. Assumptions made in theory of change planning must be explicitly defined to allow them to be verified or invalidated in subsequent micro- and macro-level evaluation and feedback. The theory of change can then be improved for subsequent planning.

Planning as the Essential Element of the Framework

A lack of systematic planning and simply relying on intuition when selecting activities may lead to doing the wrong things, which, no matter how well they are executed, will not result in desired outcomes or desired impacts.

The Framework begins with detailed planning, as the only way to evaluate whether activities are having the intended results is first to plan how they are expected to achieve those intended results. As already mentioned, five of the six framework processes are dedicated to planning. Evaluation is essentially the comparison of what effects have actually been achieved to what effects were planned. Therefore, effective evaluation must be based on well-defined goals and objectives. Evaluation findings are fed back into planning in order to improve the understanding of the effectiveness of activities and to improve the selection and implementation of these activities.

The time scales and complexity of public diplomacy planning depends on what is to be achieved. For example, the planning for a programme designed to improve or maintain the image of an organization among a large target audience will be very different to the planning to ensure the right messages comes out of a conference. Regardless of the different planning timescales and complexity, there must always be a clear understanding of what is to be achieved, how it will be evaluated, and how it supports achieving a desired impact.

[3]For more information on dashboards, scorecards and evaluation reports, please see Chapter 3 of this handbook.

2
STRATEGIC PLANNING & EVALUATION PLANNING: A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH

HOW TO USE THIS CHAPTER

This chapter of the handbook provides a detailed how-to for doing each of the five planning processes of the Framework illustrated in Figure 6. Each process is described in terms of:

- What the process does;
- The process products;
- Considerations for those charged with performing the process; and
- Step-by-step instructions for performing the process using the tools and worksheets[4] provided in Annex A to this handbook.

Grey text boxes contain useful additional information that applies to one or more of the processes.

Worksheets to support and aid the processes are provided at Annex A. An example set of partially filled out Worksheets, illustrating a realistic yet fictitious example of a desired impact, are provided at Annex B. It is recommended that when using the step-by-step instructions for the first time, you refer to a print out of the example Worksheets.

DEFINING GOALS AND AUDIENCES

Process 1: Define Goals AND Process 2: Define Target Audiences

Identifying goals and target audiences are two inextricably linked processes. Stating a goal is meaningless without some understanding of who is expected to receive the resulting messages. Conversely, a decision to focus more public diplomacy effort on a specific group will have been based on a notion of what new behaviour you want that group to exhibit or what impact is desired. Therefore the two processes that make up this phase will be discussed together in the sub-sections below.

Once the goals and target audiences have been defined, the Framework can be entered at Process 3 starting with planning for the achievement of desired impacts, then desired outcomes and so forth.

What they do

The organization's goals drive all subsequent planning in the Framework. Identifying and prioritizing strategic target audiences is an important prerequisite to planning activities as this ensures not only that the focus is on achieving relevant desired impacts or desired outcomes but also that the target audience research is focused on the correct group.

Products

- List of goals.
- List of target audiences linked to applicable goals.

[4] A set of blank worksheets can be downloaded from the JALLC website www.jallc.nato.int.

Considerations

Setting goals requires a participatory and collaborative approach among all those who are concerned with the organization's public diplomacy actions, which we refer to as *internal stakeholders*. It is important that these internal stakeholders contribute to the goal setting process and have a genuine sense of ownership for the goals agreed and a shared responsibility for their achievement.

As setting goals is an infrequent management task and requires a particular set of skills, these processes may best be completed in workshop sessions with expert facilitation. Workshop techniques can be used to discover the major concerns of the stakeholders which can be translated into goals.

Positive goals (such as those to improve or maintain) are a better starting point for developing desired impacts and desired outcome strategies than goals beginning from a statement of the concern.

It is not unusual for goals to be rather vague: they can be intangible statements of strategic intent and priority. An example goal could be: "To increase/maintain the level of support for {organization policy x in country y}".

The smaller and more well-defined the target audience, the more the strategies and activities can be focused on their needs and the more precise the public diplomacy messages can be.

It is not feasible to attempt to communicate with all target audiences no matter how well they are defined. Therefore, defined target audiences should be prioritized based on their strategic importance.

To stand a chance of being effective, communication, engagement or outreach must have messages and use media that are relevant and interesting to the target audience. Consequently, the population must be grouped into clusters who share similar attributes, which is referred to as audience segmentation and is driven by criteria developed to form homogeneous clusters. The most common segmentation criteria used are: publics (groups of people sharing common interests or views), communities, psychographics (lifestyles and cultures), demographics, and geography.

Situation analysis or available public diplomacy knowledge and experience can be used to identify useful individuals or groups within target audiences based on the way they may be concerned with the public diplomacy message topic area or the part they play in the communication chain. There are often:

- Key opinion formers. Also called influencers, these are key or important people, groups, or organizations that have a great amount of influence on the target audience, brand reputation, or public perception; e.g. politician, policy advisor, etc.
- Multipliers. Members of the target audience that will take the message and disseminate it to a wider public. They may possibly modify the message to suit their own needs and context; e.g. journalist, educator, blogger, etc.

Process 1. Step by Step[5]

Task 1A. Using Worksheet 1, describe in as much detail as possible, and using positive statements, the overarching long-term goals that the organization wants to accomplish.

Task 1B. Still on Worksheet 1, record those effects which can be observed that it is believed will show that progress towards goals is being made. These are referred to as indicators of success.

[5] See Annex B Worksheet 1 for a worked example.

Process 2. Step by Step[6]

Task 2A. Using Worksheet 2, describe each target audience and check the goals that apply to each target audience.

Task 2B. Using Worksheet 2, list target audience research questions that will guide situation analysis to answer any knowledge gaps about the target audience.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

It is likely that many practitioners will enter the Framework once the goals and target audiences have already been defined, i.e. Processes 1 and 2 are complete. The next step is strategic planning where the theory of change for the goals and target audiences will be designed. Strategic planning consists of three processes, (Process 3, 4 and 5) each of which results in an important strategic planning product:

- Process 3: A List of Strategies, describing the general approach to implementing a group of activities designed to achieve desired outcomes and desired impacts.
- Process 4: An Activity Plan, containing a programme of activities designed to pursue the strategies.
- Process 5: A Monitoring and Evaluation Data Collection Plan, supporting subsequent evaluation of results.

Strategic planning begins by defining what public diplomacy is trying to achieve through the desired impacts; and then defines a logical flow of intermediate steps—the desired outcomes and strategies—which are used to plan activities that when implemented should lead to achievement of goals. The theory of change describes the assumed link from strategies to goals and is the basis for macro-level evaluation.

Specific KPIs and targets must be decided for each desired outcome and desired impact, which are then the basis for SMART objectives (see Box 3). SMART objectives in combination with the theory of change are the foundation for evaluation. Planning strategies and activities to support an objective in the theory of change will ensure that practitioners will be less likely to conduct activities that are not contributing toward defined goals.

The feedback from evaluation is used to determine whether activities which are more expensive or provide less support to an objective or goal can be altered, scaled down, or cancelled, leading to an improved allocation of resources. A solid understanding is needed of the environment in which the organization will be conducting its activities. This understanding can be gained and deepened through situation analysis (see Box 4) which will provide the background information needed to make intelligent, logical and supportable assumptions about the linkages between goals, strategies, and activities. Situation analysis enables practitioners to determine appropriate KPIs to be used in the Monitoring, Evaluation & Feedback process.

[6] See Annex B Worksheet 2 for a worked example.

Box 3: SMART means:

Specific. What exactly is planned to be achieved for which target audience? The ‘specific’ part of an objective explains what will change for whom in concrete terms. The more specific the impact or outcome objectives are, the easier it will be to demonstrate success. Coordinate, partner, support, facilitate, and enhance are not good verbs to use in objectives because they are vague and difficult to measure. On the other hand, verbs such as provide, train, publish, increase, decrease, or schedule, clearly indicate what will be done.

Measurable. Is the desired impact—and especially the desired outcome—objective, quantifiable and can it be measured? Measures that are essentially qualitative questions such as public opinion about a topic, need to be framed in such a way that they can be quantified. This can achieved by measuring the response to Likert scale questions, e.g. to what extent do you agree with the following statements, scored 1 to 5 with 5 representing “totally agree”. Other quantification techniques are also available.

Attainable/Achievable. Is it reasonable to assume that the desired impact objective or desired outcome objective can be achieved in the proposed timeframe with the resources and support available? Setting over ambitious or unrealistic targets is planning to fail. An assessment of achievability is easier at the outcome level than at the impact level. For example, specifying an expected level of change in awareness (an outcome) is easier than specifying an achievable degree of change in an impact such as behaviour.

Relevant. Is this outcome objective aligned with the overall path to desired impact and goal? It should be if the principles of theory of change have been applied to planning.

Time bound. When will this outcome objective be accomplished? A specified and reasonable timeframe should be incorporated into the objective statement, taking into consideration the environment in which the change must be achieved, the scope of the change expected, and how it fits into the overall work plan. It could be indicated as: {By December 201x, the xxx will…}

Box 4: Situation analysis – Filling knowledge gaps.

Situation analysis is about developing a knowledge base; it is an ongoing activity throughout the planning processes rather than a specific stage of the Framework. It is the gathering of target audience information and data as well as transposing lessons learned from previous experience and evaluations. This knowledge base, together with any required formative research, will:

- Allow a better understanding and profile of the target audience, their needs and the factors that might influence their behaviour;
- Provide the background to setting outcome and impact objectives that provide enough information about the target audience to know how the theory of change can be applied in order to have greater confidence in the assumptions that activities will lead to desired outcomes;
- Describe and baseline the KPIs (see Box 5 for a description of developing KPIs);
- Help determine the best strategy to reach the target audience; the best method of engagement or outreach and so on; and,
- Give insight into the messages the target audience might respond to in terms of content, language and tone.

Certain things need to be sufficiently well known to answer the question: *"where are we now?"* and to identify the gap from the KPI target: *"where do we want to be?"* Situation analysis also provides a basis for deciding: "*what do we need to know to develop an effective programme of activities?"* Planning must be based on sound research so that there is much more chance of understanding the target audience and choosing the most effective way of reaching out and communicating with them—*doing the right things*.

Using information that has already been published, such as literature research, third party survey results, government briefs, etc. makes a very valuable contribution to the practitioner's understanding. This is known as secondary; or desk research.

Traditional and online media monitoring and content analysis is also a very useful source of information and is capable of providing continuous coverage of audience opinions, making a very useful contribution to situation awareness.

Process 3: Decide Outcomes and Strategies

What it does

Process 3 has two main focuses: first, designing the theory of change relating to the goals; and second, devising strategies to achieve those goals. It is perhaps the most involved and intellectually challenging process in the Framework. Process 3, as described here, may appear to be quite mechanistic with its series of seemingly rigid steps and Worksheets; instead it involves a great deal of mental agility and creativity founded on the professional expertise and situational awareness of the practitioner charged with carrying it out. The steps and Worksheets are meant merely as tools to help guide you through this creative process.

Based on the goals and target audiences already identified in the previous processes, desired impacts are determined. Next, the theory of change for each desired impact is defined. The planning assumptions of cause and effect must be identified along with the supporting hierarchy of desired outcomes that are assumed will lead to the desired impact being achieved. Understanding the planning assumptions, which describe relationships between desired impacts and desired outcomes, allows practitioners to set strategies to achieve the desired impacts.

In anticipation of designing the monitoring and evaluation plan (see Process 5), one or more KPIs are attached to each desired impact and desired outcome (see Box 5). Baselines, target values, and milestones are added to KPIs using additional findings from situation analysis. With the addition of KPIs, desired impacts and desired outcomes become objectives. The intended results of activities are now specific and clear so suitable strategies can be developed for them. They are now also measurable so evaluation can be planned.

Box 5: Developing Key Performance Indicators.

An absolute fundamental of a monitoring and evaluation plan is to measure the right and relevant things rather than what may have been habitually measured in the past. If the measure is not relevant to an impact objective or outcome objective, it is not a useful measure of performance.

KPIs are the most important measures of progress towards the objectives. Each objective might only have one or two KPI's but each must be chosen carefully to ensure it will endure and be relevant for the timeframe of the plan.

A metric just measures activity. A KPI is a special performance metric that is directly linked to a desired impact or desired outcome and is generally represented by a numeric value. In public diplomacy terms, a KPI could be: a level of awareness about a specific issue; the number of people re-tweeting a specific message; or even a Klout Score (an indicator of social media influence taking into account Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and other platforms).

A KPI is what will be measured to obtain observable evidence of accomplishments, changes made, or progress achieved. KPIs imply the type of data needed to be collected for evaluation.

When the outcome objective is SMART, the choice of KPIs should be obvious. When setting KPIs, ensure that:

- They have a clear and unambiguous meaning.
- Data is easily available, tangible and observable.
- The collection of the data can be carried out with available resources.
- The indicator is representative for the desired outcome or desired impact and provides an input to evaluating strategies and activities.
- There are agreed proxy indicators if the desired outcome or desired impact is difficult to quantify directly.

The monitoring and evaluation section of the plan requires that the source of and method for collecting KPI measurement data be identified, and that collection of the data is feasible.

Objectives should be formulated using SMART (that is, be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound – see Box 3) principles. Objectives may take the form:

Raise/Improve/Increase/Maintain {desired impact/outcome} among {target audience} to {KPI target} by {timeframe}.

For an example of SMART objective setting:

An example goal was given in the considerations to Processes 1 & 2 in this handbook: "To increase/maintain the level of support for {organization policy x in country y}".

A SMART impact objective to support this goal may be:

> *"To improve the support for {the organization} among {country y} key opinion formers (target audience) so that there is x% (KPI target) agreement with a series of supportive statements by end 201x" (timeframe).*

An example SMART outcome objective leading to this impact might be:

> *"To raise the awareness of the organizations policy z (desired outcome) within {country y} key opinion formers (target audience) to x% (KPI target) by end 201x (timeframe)."*

With clear impact and outcome objectives it is possible to develop strategies to achieve them. Strategies are campaigns or programmes of activities. For example, an objective may need an online media strategy and a key opinion former engagement strategy, each consisting of programmes of planned activities selected for their known effectiveness. The strategies can be thought of as defining an approach to create the conditions for the outcome and impact objectives to be reached and in turn for the desired outcomes and desired impacts to be achieved.

Products

- Lists of impact objectives and outcome objectives complete with KPIs that will be used to develop the evaluation plan.
- A set of strategies that will be used to develop activity planning.

Considerations

A theory of change is a convenient and useful simplification of reality. However, in the real world, planning assumptions should always be questioned; external factors that could change the plan should be recognized. Realism and common sense are required when setting desired impacts and desired outcomes for target audiences. A genuine impact could be achieved by changing the behaviour of the key opinion formers because the messaging can be detailed, informative and engaging. It is far more difficult to get individuals within a large geo-demographic target audience to change their behaviour because the public diplomacy messages will need to be very general in order to appeal broadly to such a large and diverse group. A desired impact that falls short of wholesale behavioural change may be as much as can reasonably be hoped for with such a large target audience.

The strategic matrix produced in Task 3A should describe the desired impacts as they relate to a goal and a target audience. It is quite likely that some desired impacts may be appropriate to more than one combination of goals and target audiences. Public diplomacy impacts are likely to be stated in terms of attitudes, support and behaviour. (See Annex B Worksheet 3A for an example.)

Desired outcomes are derived by working downwards from the desired impact, considering what needs to be achieved to reach the desired impact—the logical steps on the pathway leading to the desired impact. The desired impact must always be borne in mind when developing desired outcomes:

- What do you want the chosen target audience to be aware of, to know, and to understand?
- What do you want the target audience to have positive attitudes towards, support, and do?

The series of desired outcomes leading to a desired impact may be linear or branched depending on the number of different conditions and effects that are needed to create the desired impact. This notion is illustrated in Figure 7.

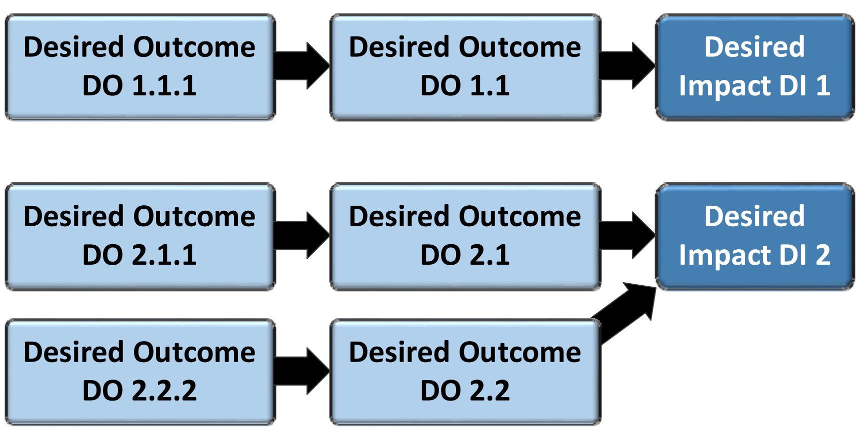

Figure 7: Desired impact can be caused by one or several sequences of desired outcomes.

The evaluation in Processes 5 and 6 can be prepared for by establishing what information—when analysed—will answer certain fundamental questions, which include: 'how successful was the activity or strategy in achieving its objectives (at the output, outcome and impact levels)'; 'are there better ways of achieving the same results'; and 'what lessons can be learned for future planning?' Defining pertinent research questions at this stage—derived from impact/outcome objectives—will help focus the later evaluation.

Process 3. Step by Step[7]

Task 3A. Using Worksheet 3A, create a matrix of goals and target audiences taken from the results of completing Worksheets 1 and 2. For each cell in the matrix where a goal applies to a target audience, define the desired impact.

Task 3B. For each desired impact developed in Task 3A, and using Worksheet 3B (use a separate Worksheet for each desired impact):

Step 3B-1 State the desired impact in the top left cell.

Step 3B-2 In the cell below, describe the planning assumption that will achieve the desired impact. Consider:

- What would need to be in place, or what condition would need to be achieved for the desired impact to happen? The rationale behind the assumption should be noted alongside it.
- It should be clear what can be reasonably assumed or what might need additional research or testing.

Step 3B-3 In the cell below, describe the desired outcome that is implied by the assumption stated above it. The desired outcome is the state where this planning assumption is expected to have been realized.

Step 3B-4 Moving down the left hand column, add a series of planning assumptions and desired outcomes by repeating steps 3B-2 and 3B-3 until the planning assumptions relate directly to taking action. In other words, the assumption contains wording such as "as a result of…" or "through doing…"

Step 3B-5 Working in reverse order (up the right hand side of the table) describe, alongside each desired outcome, the conditions required to achieve the corresponding desired outcome. These will guide the choice of strategies and can be measured during evaluation. They can be thought of as "sub-outcomes" and can have their own KPIs and targets. These conditions are the things that will be achieved through the strategies that will be developed in the next step.

Step 3B-6 Use professional public diplomacy judgement to describe strategies that are aimed at achieving the conditions in the assumptions.

Task 3C. Now, using Worksheet 3C:

Step 3C-1 For the impact and for each outcome and condition from Worksheet 3A, devise one or more KPIs, to include units and potential data sources. See Box 5 for guidance on developing the KPIs.

Step 3C-2 Set the baseline value for each KPI, which may be known from a previous measurement or it may need to be established through situation analysis. In some cases, it may be necessary to use a best estimate and then carry out a first pass of the monitoring part of the monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan (Process 5) to obtain reliable values for the next evaluation.

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[7] See Annex B Worksheets 3A, 3B and 3C for worked examples.

Step 3C-3 Set targets for each KPI, based on goals, the assumptions, and a reasonable judgment of the most likely timeframes for when outcomes can be achieved. Between the baseline and the target, there may be milestones for the KPI that correspond to the progress expected by specific times. They should be seen as progress checkpoints towards the target.

Step 3C-4 Add research questions that will be used during evaluation to investigate qualitative aspects of the desired outcomes and impacts that cannot be directly measured by the KPIs.

Step 3C-5 Describe the outcome objectives.

Process 4: Activity Planning

What it does

Process 4 represents the bulk of the planning workload. It uses best practice and staff experience to design a mix of mass communication, outreach, and engagement activities to create the conditions within the target audience which should lead to the desired outcomes and desired impacts of the theory of change. Output objectives are set to test activity efficiency and effectiveness.

Planning activities is not a process that can be readily prescribed and it is not in the scope of this Framework to offer guidelines for this process.

Products

- Activity plans.

Considerations

When selecting activities, it is essential to take note of lessons learned from past experience and feedback from evaluation. There should be a check for best practice and consideration given to alternative activities that may be more effective or efficient to achieve the goals.

Whatever the activity, either individual or as part of a programme, it should have an associated SMART output objective, which is constructed from a KPI and associated target. The output objectives should be listed and the method of monitoring described, to include the data source and research methods/tools.

Process 4. Step by Step[8]

Using Worksheet 4, and based on best practice, experience and public diplomacy skills, the detailed mix of communication, outreach and engagement activities are planned to accomplish each strategy. For each activity listed, identify who will be involved in executing the strategy and develop one or more KPIs, associated target(s), objective(s) and monitoring method(s).

Process 5: Design Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan

What it does

Process 5 covers the design of the monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan. This plan will include details of how to measure the KPIs embedded in the output, outcome and impact objectives and any general research questions needed for situation analysis (Box 4) or to support improved definition of goals, target audiences, desired impacts, desired outcomes, strategies and activities.

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[8] See Annex B Worksheet 4 for a worked example.

Monitoring and evaluation are connected. Monitoring may give rise to questions that will subsequently be answered by evaluation. Evaluation may give rise to the need for monitoring of different variables. Monitoring and evaluation can be used together to improve future strategies because they provide lessons learned and guidance to manage ongoing implementation of activities.

Monitoring gathers current information, which when viewed as a time series, helps to identify trends, whether anticipated or not. Information gathered from monitoring shows what is happening but not why. Furthermore, without analysis, raw data gathered from monitoring does not reflect programmes' and activities' relative strengths and weaknesses and so cannot alone establish their true effectiveness, efficiency, relevance or impact.

Evaluation delves into the information to ascertain meaning and context. Evaluation can answer questions about:

- Desired impact, desired outcomes and strategies planning:
  - Are the planning assumptions correct?
  - What evidence is there of causality from outputs to outcomes to impact?
  - Are the right objectives being pursued?
  - Are the KPIs true measures of performance?
- Activities and outputs:
  - How effective are the outputs in contributing to the desired outcomes?
  - How efficiently are resources being used; could the same outputs be generated with fewer resources?
  - How relevant are the outputs to the needs of the target audience?
  - What lessons can be learned?
  - What can be improved?
  - What can be done better and differently?
  - What might not be worth doing again?

Very often, evaluation takes place after the event. While this is very useful for gathering lessons learned, it does nothing to ensure the programme suitability in the first place and it does not provide the practitioners with implementation management information. It is now accepted that there are several types of evaluation that can occur at several times during the planning and implementation of activities. The Framework incorporates three types of evaluation (see Box 6).

Box 6: Three Types of Evaluation

Formative Evaluation, also called ex-ante evaluation, can take place before the implementation begins. It is a reality check on: Are the assumptions in the theory of change reasonable? Are the objectives SMART? Is the activity plan clear and coherent and does the plan heed lessons learned and best practice? Is the rationale for the deployment of resources clear and commensurate with the requirements for achieving the desired results? Do the desired outcomes and desired impacts support a goal for the organization? This ex-ante evaluation, if required, may be a review by key stakeholders or an experienced evaluator. This handbook does not include a detailed process for ex-ante evaluation. However, the principles described under Process 5, and the checklist at the end of this chapter, should provide guidance.

Output Evaluation, sometimes called implementation evaluation, takes place during the implementation of activities and focuses on outputs. For example, it may involve evaluating feedback from social media monitoring on a continuous basis, or on another basis (frequency) set out in the plan. This type of evaluation is similar to monitoring except that the measures are not just recorded and reported but focus on other aspects, such as whether: a) the resources were used efficiently in creating outputs; b) the desired outputs happened as intended; c) any unintended outputs are recognized; d) whether the activities in the plan did get implemented; e) the planned resources were not exceeded; f) the activity or programme is on track and, if not, gives a basis for implementing changes. Output evaluation adds meaning to monitoring data and can provide narrative to accompany the reporting of measures. It is best carried out by the public diplomacy practitioner with the possibility of occasional independent review.

Impact/Outcome Evaluation, sometimes called ex-post evaluation, refers to evaluating outcomes as well as impacts and can be carried out periodically as well as directly after an event. Often, long-term strategies, like digital outreach, will be evaluated while still being implemented. This kind of evaluation measures and evaluates the effect on the target audience that was intended by the outcome and impact objectives. It should be focussed on the effectiveness of the activity programme: how relevant it has been; how efficiently it has communicated the messages; and the extent to which the outcome and impact objectives have been reached. This type of evaluation also tries to establish possible causal relationships between activities and impacts/outcomes, which, in general, becomes more difficult as the timeframe lengthens.

Some significant events, such as a major conference, may benefit from an impact/outcome evaluation solely for that event. Such an evaluation could be planned and implemented by applying this Framework in its entirety to evaluation planning for that event. Other ongoing strategies will be aiming for longer-term goals. Evaluations of these strategies will be periodic to show progress and make adjustments as necessary.

Monitoring will generally be planned and managed by the responsible practitioner who owns the strategy and action plan. Evaluation is sometimes planned and managed by an independent assessment team, possibly in consultation with research and evaluation methods Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). All entities involved in monitoring and evaluation planning must coordinate with each other.

Products

- A monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan.

Considerations

There will usually be a number of stakeholders, sometimes from outside of the public diplomacy area, who will be interested in the evaluation findings. As part of the impact/outcome evaluation planning, these stakeholders should be identified so that their needs can be taken into consideration with regard to the research questions included in the evaluation and the evaluation reporting can be produced in a format relevant to their needs.

The Evaluation process may also require data collection and analysis based on more than just KPIs. This type of data collection and analysis is based on setting certain questions and criteria relating to what is being researched and evaluated. These questions are called research questions. The practitioner collects data from KPIs and other sources to help answer these questions. Below are some examples of requirements that should be taken into consideration when setting research questions:

- The scope of the research questions must match the timeframe of the strategy. Research questions relating to outcome and impact objectives can only be asked sometime after an activity has taken place: the lag between completing an activity or programme of activities and being able to observe the outcome and impact.
- The complexity of the research questions will depend on the topic but generally, a *yes* or *no* approach is too simplistic.
- Research questions need to be prioritized (in Task 5A-1) according to their relative importance and the resource constraints. Focus must be on simplicity and answering the core questions implied either directly or indirectly by the desired outcomes and desired impacts rather than the 'nice to know'. This ensures that data collection is targeted and can give the required depth of analysis and understanding.
- Research questions can fall into groups that correspond to what is being evaluated. These 'evaluation criteria' provide a useful way to frame the question. Commonly accepted criteria are; *effectiveness, efficiency, relevance,* and *results* (See Box 7).
- Some example research questions for typical activities are shown in the tables in Chapter 4.

The units of measurement of KPIs embedded in the output, outcome and impact objectives need to be stated in the data collection plan which should also specify where data will be collected (source), when it will be collected (frequency), and how it will be collected (research method and tools).

If for some reason it is necessary to evaluate activities or strategies that have not been planned using the Framework, then the expected objectives, KPIs and targets will need to be reconstructed retrospectively before evaluation begins. Process 3 can be used for this reconstruction by examining how the activity or programme is being used now, what should be the intention in terms of desired outcomes and desired impacts, what objectives could reasonably be achieved and what would be considered successful results in the light of the overall goal.

Process 5. Step by Step[9]

Task 5A. Using Worksheet 5A (use one Worksheet for each impact):

Step 5A-1 Carry over the research questions from Worksheet 3C. Questions may need to be further refined or adjusted using feedback from, for example, earlier evaluations. If this is the case, update Worksheet 3C.

Task 5B. Using Worksheet 5B (use a separate Worksheet for each impact objective):

Step 5B-1 Carry over the KPIs and related data from Worksheet 3C.

Step 5B-2 Add the relevant research questions from Worksheet 5A.

Step 5B-3 Fill in the remaining columns in Worksheet 5B. When this is complete, the data requirements for the formative evaluation, the KPI monitoring, and output/outcome/impact research questions will now be in a matrix that can be used to draw up consolidated data collection requirements for the objective.

[9] See Annex B Worksheets 5A, 5B and 5C for worked examples.

Task 5C. The final Worksheet 5C is a complete list of data collection requirements brought together from all of the individual impact objectives from Worksheets 5B and from the additional research questions listed and described in Worksheet 5A. This overview of all data collection requirements is a convenient way to plan coordinated research.

Box 7: Evaluation Criteria

Effectiveness. A measure of the extent to which an activity or programme achieves its objectives. Most impact/outcome related questions are about the *effectiveness* of activities. These types of questions are directly posed by the planning assumptions for the outcomes that are expected from the activity or programme. Impact/outcome research questions should be asked in a form that allows a degree of flexibility in achievement and time scale, e.g. "to what extent" or "how positively" or "how far". They can take the form of:

- To what extent have the outcome objectives of the planned strategy been achieved, or are likely to be achieved?
- To what extent did {activity x} contribute or not contribute to the {desired outcome y}?
- To what extent has {activity x} created an understanding of the message {y} to the target audience?
- What were the major factors that had an effect on the attainment or non-attainment of the {impact objective x}?
- Which activities in the programme were most effective in attaining the {impact objective y}? Which activities do not appear to be worth repeating?

Efficiency. A measure of the outputs in relation to the inputs (resources). Output evaluation focuses on efficiency. The questions relating to efficiency allow the practitioner to examine whether an output could have been achieved with fewer resources. This usually requires comparing alternative approaches to reaching the output. The typical style of questions is:

- Was {activity x} cost effective compared to {activity y or z} in achieving the desired effect?
- Was the programme of activities completed on time and on budget?

Relevance. The extent to which the messages, communication channels, and activities were appropriate to the needs and priorities of the target audience. The relevance of objectives may also be questioned if, having achieved them, they do not produce the right conditions for moving along the pathway to achieve an impact. Relevant questions are in the style of:

- To what extent has the target audience understood and supported the key message in {activity x}?
- Are the activities and outputs from the programme consistent with achieving the desired outcomes and desired impacts?
- Is the {objective x} still relevant to the target audience?

Results. The positive and negative changes produced by activities, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This kind of evaluation involves the main outputs, outcomes, and impacts resulting from the activities on the target audience's knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. Questions may be:

- What has happened as a result of the activities?
- What real difference have the activities made to the target audience?
- How many people have been affected?

Planning Checklist

Planning is now complete. The Worksheets should now be reviewed using the checklist in Box 8 to ensure that these basic but fundamental questions have been answered.

Box 8: Planning Checklist

1. Defining goals – how will public diplomacy support the aims of the organization?
   - Are the goals clearly stated?
   - Have indicators of success been stated?
2. Understanding the target audience – who is being addressed?
   - Is the target audience clearly defined?
   - Are the desired impacts realistic in the context of target audience size and diversity?
   - Have multipliers and others been identified who can leverage the message?
3. Situation analysis – what does the target audience know, need to know, understand and do?
   - Is it known what people think about the topic?
   - Have the information gaps been identified?
   - Have desired impacts been defined, is it clear what people should do differently?
4. Defining the impacts – what is the purpose of the programme; the desired outcomes and impacts?
   - Do the desired outcomes follow a logical flow based on sound assumptions and theory of change rational?
   - Are the objectives SMART?
   - Have milestones been defined that will show progress is being made towards this desired impact?
5. Defining the public diplomacy key messages – what will be communicated?
   - Are the messages completely in line with the desired outcomes?
   - Are they clear, understandable and accessible to the target audiences?
   - Have the messages, tone of voice, and content been tested with the target audiences?
6. Defining the strategies, activities, media etc. – how will the target audience be engaged?
   - Are the methods appropriate for the target audience and message?
   - Has best practice been checked, is it the most effective way known?
   - Have lessons learned been incorporated?
7. Selecting the monitoring tools and KPIs – how will progress be measured to check the results are on track?
   - Have KPIs and targets been set?
   - Have the data collection methods been selected?
8. Defining the questions and timing for evaluation – how and when will the plan be evaluated, lessons learned, and feedback provided?
   - Have research questions been set to reflect the objectives?
   - Has the evaluation timetable been set for activity management and other management reporting?

3

PROCESS 6: MONITOR, EVALUATE & FEEDBACK

Evaluation of activities requires:

- Monitoring of actual outputs, outcomes and impacts to judge whether KPIs have reached set targets; and,
- Research to answer research questions stated in the monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan.

Feedback and learning from monitoring and evaluation is arguably the most important part of the Framework. Monitoring and evaluation must be used to improve planning and implementation of activities and must be recorded as part of the knowledge base to inform future planning.

It is not possible to prescribe a step-by-step approach to this final process because the methods used are numerous. Specific data collection plans will require the use of a variety of research methods, and the choice of evaluation methods and tools will depend to a great extent on what specific research questions are being answered. The next chapter (Chapter 4 – Research Methods and Tools) offers a menu of research methods and tools, with recommendations for which methods and tools are best suited to answer which categories of research question. Research questions are categorized according to whether the question relates to formative evaluation, output evaluation or impact/outcome evaluation (see Box 6) or to evaluation criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance or results (see Box 7).

For more detail on data collection plans and research questions and how they are incorporated and used in the monitoring, evaluation and reporting plan, please see the explanation of Process 5 given in Chapter 2 of this handbook.

Evaluation of outcomes and impacts must be unbiased and unfiltered and the findings should have transparency and credibility so it is often best done independently of the practitioners who plan and implement the activities. It should be stressed that evaluation is about the activities and processes, not about the people who plan and implement it or their skills.

REPORTS

The Framework has three types of reporting to track progress: a dashboard, a scorecard, and an evaluation report. Each type of reporting covers a different aspect of the Framework (respectively: outputs, desired outcomes and desired impacts, and results) and relates to its own timescale or reporting frequency.

<u>A dashboard</u> provides an overview of monitoring, usually of outputs. It can be used in real-time with some media monitoring applications and can be used to produce regular and frequent reports. A dashboard is essentially data with little or no built-in evaluation and limited explanative narrative. A dashboard would typically be updated at least monthly.

<u>A scorecard</u> is a display format for less frequent reporting as it shows progress towards the desired outcomes and desired impacts. A scorecard is essentially data with little or no built-in evaluation and limited explanative narrative. A scorecard would typically be updated quarterly or biannually.

<u>An evaluation report</u> is a periodic, typically annual, evaluation of results. It presents a balanced view of all relevant results and aims to show what meaningful changes have occurred, how they might be linked to activities and judges whether the objectives have been achieved. It should contain narrative answers to the research questions and explain what has worked, what hasn't and, whenever possible, why. Evaluation reports can also be published to cover a specific event or programme.

A Dashboard

Figure 8: An Example Dashboard (courtesy of Cision Inc.)

A dashboard is a commonly used business intelligence interface where the values of KPIs are graphically displayed to show performance against targets. It can be thought of as the panel of instrument displays necessary to keep activities on track. The dashboard is particularly suitable for reporting of outputs. Media monitoring can give near real-time monitoring of output KPIs. Many social media monitoring and analysis tools produce their results in dashboard format.

It is usual to design the dashboard to suit the number and type of KPIs that will be monitored and displayed. Consideration should be given to prioritizing the information to be displayed so that the most important KPIs for short-term monitoring are given prominence.

The Framework dashboard shows KPI data and trends as follows.

KPI data

The dashboard can show the most current measurement of output on a scale relating to the KPI target. This is an excellent way to illustrate the current performance of activities.

The KPIs from some short-term outcome objectives may also be displayed to show the latest results available. Outcome objectives tend to change over a longer period and will not be measured as frequently, so the display will be current but less dynamic.

Data trends

A time series of value for a KPI can be displayed in a graph to show trends and spikes over time. Trends and spikes can be more useful than the instantaneous snapshot of results.

Software Applications

There are many software applications available that produce dashboards. For example, media monitoring services produce their own dashboards which can be customized in most cases – see Figure 8. Other packages produce dashboards from a database or spreadsheet of KPI monitoring data and are widely available at low cost. For example, Microsoft[10] supplies *PerformancePoint Dashboard Designer* as part of *SharePoint* and there are several applications to produce dashboards from *MS Access* and *Excel*.

A Scorecard

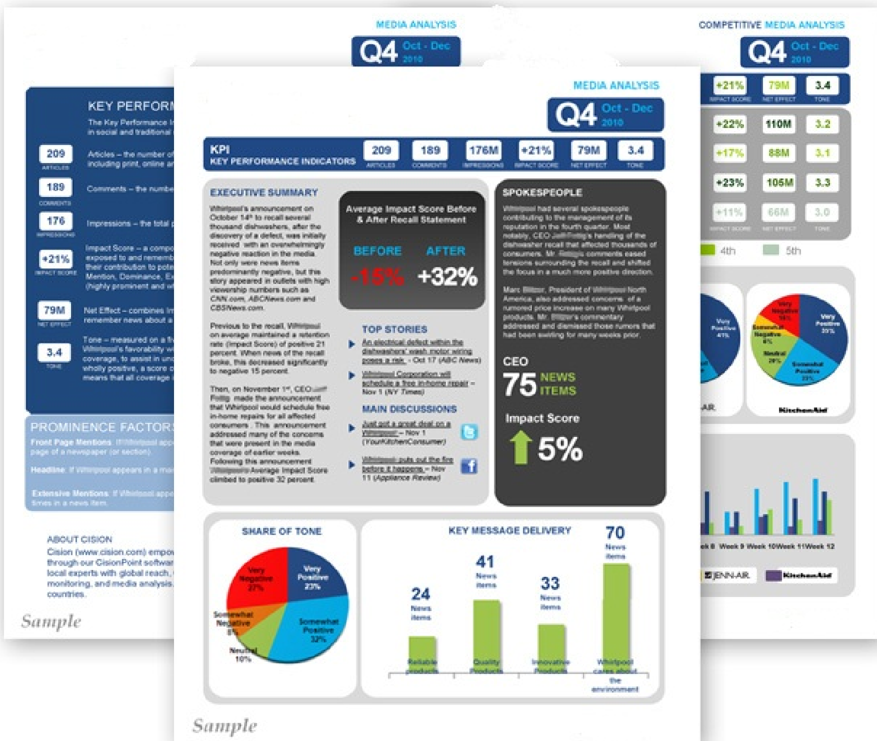

Figure 9: An example Scorecard (courtesy of Cision Inc.)

A scorecard is used to report progress towards desired outcomes and desired impacts. It should include some values but most prominence will be given to illustrating trends towards or away from targets.

The scorecard is effectively a management report and therefore monitoring data needs to be interpreted and explained, including any variances between the actual results and the expectations. An example scorecard is shown in Figure 9.

An Evaluation Report

The purpose of an evaluation report is to inform the relevant stakeholders about the findings and conclusions of the impact/outcome evaluation of activities in a more in-depth form than the dashboard or scorecard. If not otherwise specified or required, it is recommended that impact/outcome evaluation be carried out annually. In-depth evaluation will serve two purposes: firstly, it will demonstrate accountability for activities over the past year; secondly, it will help practitioners learn from their experience of what works and what does not. The evaluation report should be added to any knowledge bank that might exist for improved situation awareness.

[10] Any mention of a specific company, their products or their proprietary techniques in this handbook is solely for the purpose of illustration of the *type* and does not imply any endorsement or recommendation for its use.

The evaluation report should use clear graphics and concise narrative to describe results. The document should have an executive summary which is suitable to inform high-level stakeholders.

Feedback

The results obtained from monitoring and evaluation can be fed directly back into activity selection and implementation.

The ongoing strategies and activities can be adjusted if the outputs do not reach their targets or expectations. This micro-level evaluation will be mostly concerned with the efficiency of activities and can be used for corrective planning of the activities.

The results from outcome monitoring are reported via the scorecard and, coupled with narrative, provide valuable feedback on how progress is being made towards the outcome objectives. The evaluation of outcomes should be used to inform adaptive planning.

The results from monitoring of outcomes and impacts can form the basis of the evaluation report which may also include inputs from the other research questions that have been posed i.e. outside of the set of KPIs. It is this combined evaluation report that provides objective—ideally independent and unbiased—feedback about what has worked as planned and what has not. The feedback will be valuable when planning future strategies and activities. The evaluation report may also refer to questions about the planning assumptions used in arriving at the desired outcomes/desired impacts.

Finally, the results from the evaluation will add information to the knowledge bank to improve the understanding of how the target audience responds, and it will allow the baseline to be refined for the project.

4
Research Methods & Tools

Why Use Research Methods and Tools?

Research is an activity that can be used to support public diplomacy planning and is necessary to conduct public diplomacy evaluation. The purpose of research is to answer a research question through data collection and data analysis.

In this handbook: research **methods** are general techniques for data collection or data analysis, and research **tools** are the companies, software packages, equipment and proprietary techniques used to support the application of a specific research method.

The rest of this section provides advice on criteria to choose a research method, a menu of research methods to choose from, and guidance on planning the research using these research methods. It should be noted at this point that effective monitoring and evaluation is dependent on having valid data and justifiable findings from the research. While in-house capability can produce high-quality research, it is recommended that a trained research and evaluation Subject Matter Expert (SME) be engaged to advise on the conduct of monitoring and evaluation and, in some cases, to perform the research.

Criteria for Choosing a Research Method

The first and most important consideration when it comes to choosing a research method is to state clearly the research question. Guidance on how to formulate good research questions is provided in Chapter 2 of this handbook. The research questions will reflect whether the evaluation is being conducted to give account for or to learn from public diplomacy efforts. The purpose of the evaluation will be a key driver for the selection of data and research methods. Once the research question has been formulated, the research need should be stated in terms of the following criteria:

- Type of data: qualitative, quantitative or both.
- Amount of data – Number of individuals in sample: number of individuals and/or number of alternative items of data; e.g. narratives, published media items, social media items, web link clicks, references, etc.
- Amount of data – Time cost to individuals: total amount of time individuals need to commit to providing data over what period of time.
- Timeframe for results: how soon the results are needed after the research starts.
- Manpower: what type of research specialists are available.
- Cost to outsource: how much financial resources are available to spend on outsourced solutions.

The following sections provide more details about the criteria associated with the research need.

Type of Data

The type and amount of data needed to answer the research question will be key drivers for the choice of research methods and tools.

There are two types of data: qualitative and quantitative:

- Qualitative data is expressed in words or pictures or other non-numerical formats. It is rich data which gives an understanding of the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours of others. Qualitative data is usually needed to answer *how* and *why* questions when an in-depth understanding of human behaviour is needed. Qualitative data can be analysed using qualitative analysis techniques such as coding, categorizing, and comparing and contrasting responses. Qualitative data is usually collected from a small sample of individuals. Qualitative data can be quantified by coding certain responses on numerical scales at which point it can be treated as quantitative data.

- Quantitative data is expressed in numbers. It is data which allows measurement of the value of KPIs. Quantitative data is usually needed to answer *who, what, when, where* and *how* questions as well as any questions where facts and figures are needed. Quantitative data can be analysed using statistical techniques. Quantitative data is usually collected from a large sample of individuals. Analysis of quantitative data can be reported using qualitative statements which are then treated as qualitative data.

Usually both qualitative and quantitative data are needed to answer questions that require a combination of measurement and explanation. Table 1 summarizes the differences between qualitative and quantitative data that are relevant in deciding whether qualitative, quantitative, or both types of data are needed to answer the research question.

Table 1: Is qualitative or quantitative data needed?
(Adapted from: The Handbook for Excellence in Focus Group Research)

Qualitative Data	Quantitative Data
• Provides depth of understanding, for example, for lessons learned and case studies • Asks "Why?" • Studies motivations • Enables discovery • Allows insights into behaviour, trends, etc. • Interprets • Is time consuming to collect and analyse/interpret	• Measures level of occurrence • Asks "How many?" or "How often?" • Studies action • Provides evidence • Measures level of actions, trends, etc. • Describes • Is fast to collect and analyse

Amount of Data

The amount of data is defined both by the number of individuals from whom data can be collected and the amount of data that can be collected from each individual.

In an ideal world, it would be possible to collect and analyse data from everyone in the target audience, but resources and target audience motivation generally limit research to collecting and analysing data from a sample of that target audience. A small sample can limit the ability to extrapolate the findings to the whole target audience but a large sample can make it impossible to extract meaningful results. Taking into consideration the size and homogeneity of the target audience, it is possible to estimate how many people are needed in the sample to get a meaningful answer to the question. Whether this figure is 1, 10, 100 or 1000 will affect the choice of research method. It is also important to determine who is selected for the target audience sample. Different sampling techniques, such as random sampling, stratified sampling or convenience sampling, can be used to minimize bias and ensure the sample is representative of the population.

Whether qualitative or quantitative data or both are needed, the burden on the individuals' time must be considered. The different research methods and tools each impinge on the time of the individuals in the sample to a different degree; from requiring no extra effort to requiring several hours of work.

Some research methods eliminate the need for individual participation in data collection altogether. These methods rely on data that is available as a natural consequence of the individual living their life, such as media articles, web click patterns, social media activity, or published reference documents. If the data needed is available in one of these indirect ways, research can be faster, easier and cheaper, although the results may be more open to interpretation than when using data directly supplied by individuals for the purposes of the research.

If data is hard to come by, triangulation—the use of three or more theories, sources or types of information, or types of analysis to verify and substantiate an evaluation—can be used to give a more robust result.

Timeframe

Timeframe relates to *when* the answer to the question is needed and whether the question relies on just one collection and analysis of data or multiple collections and analyses at specified intervals within a given timeframe. Some research methods can give instant feedback; others will take days, weeks or even months to produce results.

Manpower

Manpower relates to the skills and experience of the people available to conduct the research or to guide an external body to do the research. Most methods require research specialists to use them correctly. Research specialists can be generalists or specialize in qualitative or quantitative methods or indeed in any specific method.

Cost

Cost refers to the amount of financial resources available to spend on contracting an external body (outsourcing), buying software or other costs relating to the research. For most research methods, the cost can vary considerably depending on the specific tool chosen, from being free to costing hundreds of thousands of Euros.

Menu of Research Methods

This handbook describes eight research methods commonly used to support public diplomacy evaluation. The criteria associated with the research need can be looked up in the columns of Table 2. The row or rows that best match the criteria highlight the most suitable research method(s) to use to answer the research question. The menus in Tables 3, 4, and 5 can also be used to narrow down the choice of method based on the type of evaluation, the type of research question criteria, or the public diplomacy programme type it will evaluate.

If a method set out in this handbook is unfamiliar, it is highly recommend that it is investigated in detail before attempting to apply it. There are plenty of textbooks on how and when to apply research methods[11].

[11] A good overview is contained in the Handbook of Research Methods in Miller and Yang, Public Administration, Second Edition (Public Administration and Public Policy) Miller Kaifeng Yang.

Table 2: Menu of Research Methods

Research Methods	Research Need Criteria					
	Type of data	Number of individuals in sample	Time cost to individuals	Timeframe for results	Manpower	Cost to outsource (EUR)
Focus Group	mostly qualitative	5–100 individuals (in groups of 6–10)	1h – 2h once	1 day to 1 month	moderator-analysts	1000's – 10000's
Interview	mostly qualitative	1–20+ individuals	30m – 1h once	1 day to 1 month	interviewer-analysts	1000's – 10000's
Survey	mixed qualitative-quantitative	1-1000's individuals	1m – 30m once	instant to several weeks	survey analysts	1000's – 100000's
Observation	mostly qualitative	1–20 individuals	no extra effort necessary	1 day to several months	observer-analysts	1000's
Narrative Inquiry	mixed qualitative-quantitative	1–200 individuals 1-1000's narratives	several hours over several months	instant to several months	narrative collector-analysts	set up 100000's then 1000's
Media Monitoring & Analysis	mixed qualitative-quantitative	social media: 1–100's individuals general: 1–1000's media items	no extra effort necessary	instant to several weeks	media analysts	free – 10000's
Web Analytics	quantitative	0 individuals 1–1000's visits	no extra effort necessary	instant	web analysts	free – 10000's
Desk Research	mixed qualitative-quantitative	0 individuals 1–100+ references	no extra effort necessary	1 week to several months	research analysts	1,000's – 10000's

By considering the general type of research question arising in different situations, the tick marks in the following tables (Table 3, 4 and 5) advise which methods may be most suitable.

Table 3: Menu of Research Methods based on Evaluation type

	Focus Group	Interview	Survey	Observation	Narrative Inquiry	Media Monitoring & Analysis	Web Analytics	Desk Research
Formative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Output Evaluation (Micro)			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Impact/Outcome Evaluation (Macro)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Table 4: Menu of Research Methods based on Evaluation Criteria

	Focus Group	Interview	Survey	Observation	Narrative Inquiry	Media Monitoring & Analysis	Web Analytics	Desk Research
Effectiveness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Efficiency			✓		✓	✓	✓	
Relevance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Results	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Table 5: Menu of Research Methods based on Public Diplomacy Programme Type

	Focus Group	Interview	Survey	Observation	Narrative Inquiry	Media Monitoring & Analysis	Web Analytics	Desk Research
Engagement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Mass Communications	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

As is evident from the tables above, a number of research methods can be suitable to answer the same research question. The decision on which method to use depends on the features of each method as further described in the following sections.

Focus Group

What is it?

A focus group, or group discussion, relies on the interaction between group members (respondents) who are led through a structured discussion by an experienced moderator. The discussion starts at a general level and then focuses on the main topic being researched. A moderator will use various techniques to stimulate and guide discussion as well as encourage debate amongst respondents.

When is it useful?

A focus group can be a very useful method during the strategy planning stage. It provides insight and depth and generally results in a better understanding of how people think and why they hold the attitudes they do than might be yielded from individual interviews. Focus groups deliver qualitative insights where the research question calls for exploration and identification of opinions, attitudes, behaviours, and motivations. However, insights from focus groups are not truly representative of larger populations and great care must be taken in drawing generalizations from them.

To be effective, a focus group discussion relies on individuals contributing in an open and honest manner. Cultural background, perceived hierarchy in the group, and individual personalities can inhibit openness and honesty in the group and must be considered when choosing subjects for a focus group. A good moderator is needed to ensure particular members do not dominate and to avoid "group think".

A focus group being held for the purposes of evaluation can simultaneously serve as a public diplomacy activity in its own right. A focus group can be used together with a survey: to inform the content of a survey or after a survey to add the *why* to the survey's *what*.

Format

Focus groups can be carried out physically or virtually:

- A physical focus group usually includes around eight individuals and is held for approximately 90 minutes. Larger groups are harder to keep on track and some opportunity to engage may be lost. Smaller groups are acceptable but fewer than five participants usually limits fruitful interaction.
- A virtual focus group can be set up as a live group during a prearranged period or as a Bulletin Board Focus Group (BBFG) where questions are posed by the researcher and participants respond directly to the question and to other people's responses. For public diplomacy, BBFGs may offer some advantages over physical groups: there is more time, flexibility, less fear of intimidation, and there are opportunities to collect input from across different locations and different time zones.

Participation

For each focus group, the respondents are recruited based on selection criteria to ensure that the focus group is made up of people who are likely to have similar views and/or needs. If different perspectives are needed (different demographic, expertise or experience etc.) then these should be covered separately. Generally, a minimum of three focus groups for each perspective is advisable. Each group session can either be with a fresh set of individuals or formed by a panel whose opinions and attitudes are tracked over time.

It is relatively easy to recruit for focus groups among the general public. Members of the public normally expect a small inducement to give their time to attend. Recruitment from the general public is usually managed by a specialist agency working to a criteria brief.

Groups from a network, such as key opinion formers that are being targeted with activities, might be significantly harder to recruit. They may be spread over several locations and have very busy schedules. Opportunities to reach these individuals may arise during conferences and other professional events where they are a captive audience. Recruiting from a network is best done by personal invitation from a relevant member of the organization.

The role of the moderator

The focus group session is managed by a moderator. The moderator uses a prepared discussion guide which ensures that the required topics are covered in a logical flow. An important part of the moderator's job is to ensure that more dominant individuals do not restrict the contribution from others during the remainder of the discussion. Therefore the moderator will often start a focus group with an introductory discussion to warm up the participants.

The moderator should be an experienced qualitative researcher but does not need to be an SME in the topic area. The moderator should be briefed on the key issues so that important points are recognized when they are being made.

Where possible, the moderator should be chosen so as not to be out of place with the type and seniority of the group. The moderator must:

- Prevent any individuals from dominating or hijacking the discussion.
- Explain that the discussion belongs to the respondents and that all viewpoints are valid.
- Be skilled enough to guide the discussion but not steer it towards his preconceptions about the issue.
- Create an environment where respondents feel confident to express their views freely.

Data capture and analysis

A focus group should be recorded and, preferably, be transcribed. The recording of a virtual focus group has the advantage of being an exact copy of the respondents' contribution and is available instantly. It is possible to hold the group in a facility where the group is observed by stakeholders from behind a one-way mirror.

The findings of the focus group are written up by the researcher who must answer the research questions, as well as raising other relevant issues. Post focus group analysis should follow sound qualitative analysis principles of coding, categorizing, comparing, and contrasting responses.

Tools and cost

Focus group research will usually be contracted out to a specialist research provider. Physical focus groups are relatively expensive at around EUR 3000 per group.

An online focus group tool may be cheaper. One supplier of online qualitative software is *itracks*. They offer bulletin board focus group platforms which can facilitate highly involved discussions that can unfold over extended timeframes. It allows multilingual and multimedia responses to be gathered and translated from anywhere in the world.

Interview

What is it?

Interviews are one-to-one conversations held with interviewees who are familiar with the topic area and are aimed at gathering information from key stakeholders within the target audience.

When is it useful?

Interviews are appropriate for evaluating engagement with key opinion formers. Interviews yield opinions, perspectives, suggestions, and valuable insights as the respondents' answers can be probed for better understanding. They are time consuming so subjects require careful selection.

Interviews are often a rich source of data but there are some potential weaknesses and pitfalls:

- There may be an initial degree of mistrust or wariness on the part of the interviewee that the interviewer must overcome in order to obtain an open/honest response.
- There may be certain topics/information the interviewees are not willing or comfortable to discuss/share.
- It can be very challenging for the interviewer to remain neutral and not influence the direction/responses of the interview with his/her own biases.
- Capturing data from an interview requires detailed, complete, and accurate notes of the exchange. Creating summary notes of responses can later result in misinterpretations of what was actually stated.

- Because it is an ongoing dynamic conversation, language and cultural differences can be significant.

Format

There are three general types of interviews, although in practice they can often overlap in execution:

- Structured interview. This is in essence an orally administered survey with a detailed and structured script like a questionnaire. There is little or no scope to explore responses or issues that arise. This format is suited to telephone interviewing (especially Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing or CATI) where the interviewer is not knowledgeable in the subject area or skilled in interview techniques. Omnibus surveys also follow this methodology. Because of the structured nature, this format is suitable for comparing responses across several respondents but the depth of content is relatively limited.
- The unstructured interview. The interviewer has only general guidelines about the topic area to cover and few, if any, prepared research questions to answer. Sometimes the interview is purely for discovery of opinions. Broad based questions are asked to engage the respondent in an open, informal, and spontaneous discussion allowing for further questions that probe deeper to gather more information on the topic. Unstructured interviews are useful when there is little information about a topic, but they require a high degree of interviewer skill to yield useful in-depth qualitative information. Analysis of the data can also prove very difficult.
- The semi-structured interview. This is perhaps the most useful style of interviewing for public diplomacy issues. The interviewer coordinates the conversation according to a prepared discussion guide. This guide will cover the key research topics that are needed for situation awareness or evaluation. The interviewer can follow a more natural flow which reflects the interviewee's experiences and standpoint. This style of interviewing requires considerable skill and experience.

The interview is most productive if it is face-to-face as this allows a relationship to develop and the interviewer to pick up on the non-verbal aspects of communication from the interviewee. However, interviews can be an expensive and unrealistic option if respondents are geographically dispersed. Telephone interviews are effective in many cases and senior respondents are often more likely to give their time, but these telephone interviews must be pre-arranged so subjects understand the reasons for the interview and know it is not just another telephone survey.

Participation

Interviews can be very time consuming so subjects must be selected carefully. Interviewees should be key stakeholders who are familiar with the topic area.

Data capture and analysis, tools and cost

To allow the interviewer to focus on the line of questioning and the responses without taking too many notes, it is very desirable to record the interview for subsequent analysis. Some respondents feel uncomfortable with a microphone present, so if they still resist after an explanation of the reasons then comprehensive notes will need to be taken.

Online interviews allow a researcher to use a platform allowing chat, audio or webcam communications that can be recorded. An advantage of the online interview over a telephone interview is that reactions can be observed and stimulus materials can be shown during the interview. *VisionLive* is an example provider of online interview facilities.

Interview or Focus Group?

It can be difficult to choose between Focus groups and interviews since the criteria for choosing either research method are very similar. Table 6 highlights the situations that each method deals with best.

Table 6: Interviews and Focus Groups

Focus Groups are most useful when:	Interviews are most useful when:
• Where issues or policy need to be explored and insights captured from different points of view. • Where concepts are being tested and interaction between group members can stimulate discussion. • Where individuals may need time to absorb and reflect before contributing rather than have to give an answer under one-on-one interview pressure. • Where an issue needs exploration from first principles to get understanding. • Where the group has some knowledge of the topic. • Where there is a low risk of the group being hijacked or strongly influenced.	• Where opinions are needed from geographically dispersed key individuals. (online focus groups are an alternative) • Where the sample is small. • Where the subject or policy may be sensitive. • Where the culture does not support open sharing of frank opinions. • Where an important respondent is not able to attend a focus group. • Where input is required that is not biased by the views of others. • Where respondents may need access to their information before replying.

Survey

What is it?

Surveys are studies in which the same highly structured set of questions is posed to a sample of respondents deemed to be representative of the target audience. A survey can be completed by the respondent (self-administered) or by telephone or street interview. Survey responses can give both quantitative and qualitative data depending on the wording and type of question. By their nature, surveys measure how people respond to previously identified issues, statements, etc.

When is it useful?

Surveys are very useful for measuring individual opinions, attitudes and beliefs from a sample of the target audience and for monitoring medium and longer-term changes in them. Surveys are usually most useful for impact/outcome evaluation (after activities have taken place) and have limited value to support planning.

Surveys are best used in conjunction with interviews or focus groups so any qualitative findings can be tested by survey on a larger sample or findings from a survey can be explored further in interviews or focus groups.

Table 7 lists some of the major strengths and weaknesses of using surveys.

Format

A survey can provide purely numeric quantitative data, as well as quantifiable data such as the results of a Likert scale question[12]. Open-ended questions can also be asked which provide qualitative data.

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[12] A Likert scale is a measure in which the respondents are asked to evaluate, based on some type of subjective or objective criteria, their level of agreement or disagreement with a statement. Likert scales *usually* have 4 to 7 "anchors". On a 5-point scale, these might be: 1-Strongly disagree; 2

Table 7: The Strengths and Limitations of Surveys.

Strengths of the Survey Method	Limitations of the Survey Method
• The actual administration can be relatively inexpensive. • Can be used to describe the characteristics of a large population (no other tool provides this general capacity). • Can be administered from remote locations using mail, email, web or telephone. • Very large samples are feasible which lend themselves to statistical analysis. • Multiple questions can be asked about a given topic, enhancing the analysis. • There is flexibility during survey creation in deciding on the questions and how they will be administered. • Standardized questions make measurement more precise by enforcing uniform definitions on the participants. • Standardization ensures that similar data can be collected from groups, then interpreted comparatively (between groups). • High reliability is obtainable since all subjects are presented with a standardized stimulus. • Correlation between different questions is evident, e.g. to what extent satisfaction with the event led to behaviour change. • The way the questions are asked may help participants to recall information.	• Standardization forces the development of questions general enough to be appropriate for all respondents—a risk of lowest common denominator. • Standardization may miss some aspects that are most appropriate to some of the respondents. • There is a greater burden on the analyst to assure a reasonable number of the selected sample will reply. • Participants may find it difficult to recall information or tell the truth about controversial issues/questions. • Survey research (as opposed to direct interactions with the respondents) seldom deals with context. • The way the questions are asked may bias participants towards an answer.

Surveys can be conducted by post, online, telephone or in the street. They are expensive (unless done online) and require expert analysis using sound statistical methods. Online survey platforms, where the respondent is invited to participate by email or other electronic message and which also provide rudimentary survey analysis, offer a cheap and easy method to conduct a survey. But one should be aware that while such platforms with their highly polished interfaces may make survey creation appear to be easy, creating an effective survey in fact involves a great deal of thought and effort. No amount of polish can compensate for a poorly thought out or badly designed survey. The art of creating and carrying out a high-quality survey is significantly more subtle than these online interfaces makes it seem.

Omnibus surveys—where the survey is shared between several organizations and questions are purchased—can be an economical and fast way to discover more about target audience attributes and are commonly used by large brand owners for measuring short-term responses to communication campaigns. It has some relevance for public diplomacy evaluation at the very general public opinion level.

Polls are a type of survey where the questions tend to have very simple and limited answers, usually “yes” or “no”. A poll may sometimes be appropriate to obtain information from participants during and after a conference or event for example. As public diplomacy issues and objectives are relatively complex, it is likely that a more in-depth survey will be of significantly more value than a simple poll and will be worth the additional time and resources required.

Disagree; 3-Neither agree nor disagree; 4-Agree; 5-Strongly agree. Likert questions can be very useful for giving a quantified coding of the responses that can be analysed statistically.

Participation

Major considerations when conducting a survey are how to identify a sample of individuals within a target audience, how to obtain their contact details and so on.

Considerations for the survey analyst

The sample is designed so that it can be statistically significant and conclusions from the survey can be regarded within reasonable limits as representing the target audience at large. Whatever the method of collecting survey data, good sampling is necessary so that the survey group is a fair representation of the larger target population. There are various sampling techniques which attempt to obtain a sample which is unbiased, such as random sampling, stratified sampling (where there is an attempt to match the demographic or other proportions of the target audience) or convenience sampling (where individuals are chosen because they are available). A good sample will be truly random and representative of the larger population. A good sample is easier to collect using random sampling than convenience sampling, but in any case caution and expertise are required to interpret survey results.

Generally speaking, the larger the sample, the more likely it is to represent the target population. There are a number of online calculators that will provide sample size if a good estimate of the size of the target population is known. For large target populations, of say over 20 000, Table 8 shows the largest margin of error that would occur with different sample sizes. If 50% of a sample of 300 say ‘x’, then Table 8 indicates that, based on this survey of 300 individuals, we can be 95% confident that between 44% and 56% of the target population would say ‘x'. It can be seen that the margin of error only differs by a few percentage points for samples of 500 compared with samples of 2000. For large populations a sample size of 400 usually gives good results without excessive cost. Even in large populations, smaller samples can yield significant results when the expected results are close to 0% or 100%. A trained survey analyst will calculate exact margins of error during their analysis of the survey data.

Table 8: Approximate sample tolerances at 95% confidence level for large populations.

Survey Sample Size	Margin of Error
> 1500	2
800 to 1500	3
500 to 800	4
400 to 500	5
300 to 400	6
200 to 300	7
100 to 200	10
50 to 100	14

Detailed instructions on survey writing are widely available online. Questions can be either open-ended or closed-ended. A questionnaire usually includes both types of items so that respondents can express their views in different ways. Open-ended items ask respondents to answer in their own words and require qualitative analysis such as categorizing, coding, and searching for patterns and issues in the same way that information from interviews and focus groups is analysed. Closed-ended items ask respondents to select an answer from a list. This can be a simple yes or no or a Likert scale.

Questions should: be easy to understand, ask for only one item of information, and be organized in a logical sequence. It is standard practice to ask simple non-challenging questions first so that the respondent is more prepared to answer any more sensitive or difficult questions once they are engaged with the task. The questionnaire should be kept as relevant and short as possible.

The question formulation should come directly from the KPIs for outcome and impact objectives. The questionnaire can also contain supplementary research questions.

Online surveys provide the opportunity for dynamic routing, allowing the sequence of questions asked to be linked to the answers given by the respondent. This is a very useful function as it allows for supplementary questions that are relevant to their answers as well as keeping the respondent more engaged with the survey.

A questionnaire must be tested before it is used to verify that the questions are not misleading, that they can be clearly understood, and that they are not biased.

Data capture and analysis, tools and cost

Simple feedback forms (after an event for example) can provide output and some outcome data. Tablet and smartphone applications are available for event participants to provide feedback on content in real time, allowing output monitoring which can be used to adjust the delivery of a key message and improve engagement as the event is happening.

Practitioners can use online questionnaires to survey the majority of the target audiences as long as the survey is properly designed and the target population properly sampled. This is a key method of monitoring KPIs. It is possible to conduct occasional surveys of randomly selected respondents to monitor changes in the wider target audience but also to resurvey some respondents to measure their individual change.

The rigorous analysis of survey results is a specialist subject requiring a good understanding of statistics. However, popular online survey packages such as *Snap* or *Survey Monkey* do provide good functionality for cross tabulation and manipulation of Likert data as well as good charting facilities. This level of analysis functionality is adequate for monitoring and interpreting data for most public diplomacy needs as long as the basic statistical rules are understood. Survey packages will also export to *SPSS*[13] or *MS Excel* for more detailed statistical analysis if required.

Global Omnibus surveys are available from a number of research contractors like *TNS Global*, *Ipsos-Mori* and *Gfk* who undertake the Nations Brand Index. Gallup International offers a service using a worldwide network of market research polling firms covering 62 countries. All of these providers have good international coverage and carry out face-to-face, online, and telephone interviews with large samples of individuals. Omnibus surveys are used mainly for fast response consumer brand awareness but are often also used for social science and public opinion.

Observation

What is it?

Observation records a behaviour or situation observed by a researcher or third party in the environment of the target audience; for example, observation of how users navigate a website (accompanied surfing). Observation may include behaviour observations or reports from committee or policy meetings and so on.

When is it useful?

Observation can be used to note tangible change relating to activities or goals. Observation is also useful if the public diplomacy engagement involves participatory discussions or debates. Observation relies on human perception so it can be biased.

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[13] SPSS is a predictive analytics software package produced by IBM: http://www-01.ibm.com/software/analytics/spss/solutions.html.

Format

Observation can be formal or informal. Formal observation may involve observers using a checklist of SMART objectives to guide their observations. Staff may, for instance, collect informal observations during meetings and conversations with influential members of the target audience.

The role of the observer-analyst

Observers gather information and report on situations in the environment of the target audience. Observers must be trained to recognize when an observation is relevant to the evaluation and to record their observations as carefully and as objectively as possible.

Data capture and analysis

The challenging issue with observation is to establish an appropriate reporting channel and method so that any relevant observations get noticed and acknowledged by whoever is tasked. This may mean opening lines of communication with trusted observers in certain countries and briefing them on what to look for—the desired outcomes and desired impacts that the organization wants to achieve. When observation is informal, it can be difficult to collect structured data or to brief the observer formally.

Narrative Inquiry

What is it?

Narrative inquiry is the gathering of research information through collecting and analysing storytelling by individuals in the target audience. It is based on the theory that change—in understanding, support, behaviour, etc.—can be seen in the stories people tell and how those stories shift over time. If these stories are analysed and coded using a standardized indexing concept, a good understanding can be achieved of the beliefs and also where emerging beliefs might lead.

When is it useful?

The method provides a quick way to obtain further detail to determine what people are thinking about a topic. Correlation techniques may show significant trends or categories in the data, possibly including the emergence of new opinions. Recognizing which new opinions can be nurtured by public diplomacy messages is a useful input to public diplomacy strategy planning.

A downside of this method is that meaningful data depends on selecting the right concepts for indexing—i.e. meaningful coding of the observations—and getting the topic questions right for the target audience.

Format

Individuals record their feelings, thoughts, or actions themselves as narratives. This recorded data is then coded by the individual or an analyst.

Data capture and analysis, tools and cost

Cognitive Edge Inc[14]. is one company engaged in this field of narrative inquiry and argues that “natural sensemaking” can show which public opinions have potential for change and which do not. Cognitive Edge’s principles suggest that the topics of conversation (or stories) change over time through complex adaption and, therefore, if the story landscape is understood, then it can be influenced (along its course of complex adaptation) in the right

[14] Any mention of a specific company or their proprietary techniques in this document is solely for the purpose of illustration of the *type* and does not imply any endorsement or recommendation for its use.

direction through appropriate public diplomacy messaging and engagement. They have developed a technique to collect many micro-narratives or street-stories from individuals which the author self-tags (codes) using a system of indexing developed for the particular research topic. The result is a large volume of stories that can be quantified (by the indexing) and therefore treated statistically. The quantitative data shows the overall situation, the qualitative data gives the stories and background detail.

A benefit of the Cognitive Edge tool is the large amount of qualitative data with preserved content coming directly and continuously from the target audience rather than waiting for a periodic survey. The tool provides a very quick way to determine what people are thinking about a topic and also an ability to drill-down for detail.

Difficulties with the Cognitive Edge tool are that meaningful results are dependent on selecting the right concepts for indexing (i.e. meaningful coding of the observations) and getting the topics right for the target audience. Indexing concepts (i.e. observation coding methodology) are usually derived in a workshop. The tool also relies on the users within the target audience having access to computers. The tool currently has a very limited supplier base but the concept is generally considered to be sound.

Media Monitoring and Analysis

What is it?

Media monitoring and analysis is the systematic observation and analysis of traditional press, broadcast, TV and radio coverage and social media dialogues and other contributions in online communities. Criteria and measures such as key words, article length, position and content of the coverage are monitored and analysed to uncover themes, trends and the reach of messages and changes in opinion. Media monitoring and analysis uses both qualitative and quantitative data and analysis methods.

When is it useful?

Print, broadcast and social media coverage of specific issues relevant to the organization is a rich source to judge tone and sentiment and whether opinions and attitudes are changing. It can uncover themes, trends, reach of messages and changes in opinion giving valuable insights. Such information can provide the media radar that is so useful during situation analysis and as a benchmark for future evaluation of activities.

Media monitoring and analysis can provide real-time monitoring of the efficiency of some activities and longer-term tracking for monitoring of impact/outcome KPIs. Social media monitoring and analysis can also be used to identify the sites that target audiences visit online, and therefore which social media strategies might yield the best results.

Format

Media monitoring and analysis can be of traditional media or social media. With regard to social media, some key aspects that may need tracking and analysis are:

- Fan/follower data – how many people are in the organization's various social networks, and how are they growing. Some are active 'listeners'; some may not be paying attention. Who are the opinion formers?
- Comments – how many fans/followers are engaging with the messages by commenting on them—and what are they saying?
- Social interaction data – how are people interacting with, sharing and re-sharing the organization's content on social networks?
- Social content performance – how is the content posted by the organization on social sites performing in terms of changing opinion and other desired outcomes?

The role of the media analyst

Expert input is suggested for designing the data gathering process and analysis of the data. Social media monitoring can produce a vast amount of data around mentions on *Facebook*, *Twitter* or Blogs. Care is necessary as much of this basic data is irrelevant for detailed evaluation but is useful for monitoring the results of activities. It is the real opinion formers who are important and merit tracking. They both respond to or amplify the organization's messages, or create their own. The same is true for traditional media; some publications and articles are of more relevance to the organization than others and the media analyst will need to filter the data to get meaningful results.

Data capture and analysis, tools and cost

Traditional media monitoring and analysis is often conducted separately from social media monitoring and analysis although many traditional media monitoring and analysis companies now offer social media monitoring and analysis services.

<u>Traditional press and broadcast media analysis</u> requires considerable resources. Comprehensive global services are often impossible to achieve in-house and outsourcing is a realistic alternative. There are a number of companies who provide international monitoring and analysis services in many languages. They can send emails to advise of certain trends in the coverage as well as provide regular reports useful for tracking some KPIs or monitoring the outputs and outcomes of activities or related international events.

There are several commercial service providers, such as Kantar Media, Cision and Burson-Marsteller. Some also offer a database of international journalists and key opinion formers (also called key influencers). The organization's own contacts can be integrated into such a database to: provide an effective and efficient platform for issuing targeted press releases, obtain forward notice of any upcoming editorial pieces in many of the major titles, and establish and maintain a relationship with that key target audience.

Several of the companies providing monitoring and analysis of traditional media also offer a service covering social media, providing the attraction of an integrated one-stop-shop for all public diplomacy media monitoring needs. The range of possibilities offered by companies like Kantar and others is comprehensive. For example; Burson-Marsteller offers a *Media Intelligence Suite,* which contains a range of services giving clients real-time information and in-depth analysis of their presence in traditional and digital media. At its core is a web-based media monitoring and analysis tool, which integrates all relevant news content—from sources including online, print, broadcast, databases, and newswires—onto one central website accessible to the client. Because the articles are fed into the website almost simultaneously with their publication, the news platform is always up-to-date. A team of experienced editors and consultants then assesses and evaluates the articles according to their relevance to the client. Clients can also access the analytical reports and clippings at any time and monitor the editorial process, or easily create their own individual reports based on specific issues or critical key words. Using the platform, an up-to-date statement on the company's positioning in the media landscape can be created.

Another example is Cision, a company linked to a number of international offices to give global coverage. All media channels can be monitored by their *Global Analytics* service and the results are analysed and displayed in a number of interactive dashboards. This can provide continuous monitoring of KPIs and could be ramped up quickly to cover a crisis or special event. The top tier international media is covered worldwide and articles can be summarized into English if necessary. Cision can give impact scores from a tailored set of global coverage along with potential impressions to give a "net effect" that can be tracked over time. The suite also includes a “PR dashboard”, news alerts and tickers, trend and issue reports, as well as social media analysis which will integrate with *Radian6*.

There are a large number of tools available and the options will continue to grow and change over time. There is an obvious danger of paralysis by over monitoring and care should be taken to watch the key indicators rather than the nice-to-know.

Social media monitoring and analysis can be supported by many tools that: help understand the social media audience (*Google Insights*, *Google Analytics*, etc.); listen to social network conversations (*Radian6*, etc.); reveal engagement targets and grade the ability of your organization to drive conversations (*Klout* etc.); and outreach through publishing (*Hootsuite*, *Twitter*, *Facebook*, RSS, hashtags and so on).

Several tools are available which attempt to grade the influence of bloggers, journalists, twitterers and commentators. *Klout* is of particular interest because it uncovers key opinion formers, their expertise, and their networks. It measures influence based on a person's ability to drive action in social networks—giving greater understanding of who might be best at sharing the message, and who is consuming that content. *Klout* classifies social talkers based on the person's network size, content, and interactions on *Twitter* and assigns them one of 16 types; each type indicates a certain online behaviour.

HootSuite is another example product that manages social media platforms and provides some analysis and dashboard interfaces. It is predominantly an account management tool rather than a monitoring tool and is best used for posting social media content as digital engagement rather than evaluating the results.

Web Analytics

What is it?

Web analytics refers to the measurement and analysis of clicks on links to websites and related online products. Web Analytics can answer questions like:

- How effective is Twitter or LinkedIn or Facebook at attracting visitors to your organization's websites?
- What are the best public diplomacy messages for creating a visit response?
- Which articles, reports, videos, downloads, etc. are most popular?

When is it useful?

Web analytics are useful if the aim of the research is to improve the effectiveness of a website through an improved understanding of how visitors navigate to the site and what they look at or do on the site. Traffic analysis of the number of visitors to a website and specific pages is a useful indicator of interest in topics and can reveal trends.

What format can it take?

Web analytics will track several important performance metrics, some of which are good indicators of digital engagement (time spent, page views, etc.):

- Segmented traffic sources – direct traffic, search type, earned media (referrals from tradition and online media), email links, etc.
- Number of unique visitors.
- Number of page views.
- Number of visits.
- Time spent on each page and whole site.
- Bounce rate (leave after one page visit).
- Number of public diplomacy objectives reached (downloads, registrations, etc.).
- Conversion rate (public diplomacy objectives reached/unique visitors).

Tools and cost

Google Analytics is a popular free tool and can produce excellent customized reports. Integrated paid-for packages like *Radian6* will also link social media content with web analytics and show the sources of referred website traffic. Radian6 has a wealth of dashboard reporting functionality to monitor KPIs relevant to many activities.

Desk Research

What is it?

Desk research is also referred to as document/literature review or secondary data research. It is the method of collecting existing data from a variety of sources such as existing documentation and information published online. Desk research yields quantitative or qualitative information.

When is it useful?

Desk research of internal documents, records and other third party published information can provide a sound basis for understanding the situation and environment and provides useful background information to support planning. Published information is also a means to deliver evidence of environmental change that may affect objectives and concrete change which may be linked to public diplomacy activities, for example, political statements of support and so on.

The role of the research analyst

The research analyst will need to verify reliability of third party data and synthesize diverse findings into conclusions relevant to public diplomacy evaluation.

Data capture and analysis

Desk research requires organizing potentially large amounts of data which should be managed as part of organization's knowledge base.

5
Guidance for the Evaluation of Typical Public Diplomacy Communication and Information Programmes

Public diplomacy programmes can be classified into two broad categories; *engagement with individuals* and *mass communications*. This categorization is adopted for the convenience of describing typical evaluation techniques and there is some overlap between the categories.

Engagement with individuals or groups

People-to-people engagement is an effective way to conduct public diplomacy as it can provide a platform for dialogue to take place. Personal engagement can be through events, seminars and conferences, visits and missions, exchange programmes as well as interacting directly with policy makers, opinion leaders, politicians, bloggers and other experts within a target audience. A principal aim of this type of engagement is relationship building with influencers and the target audiences they may be part of, resulting in better understanding and support of the policies and rational of the organization.

Events and conferences are probably the most commonly used methods of this type of engagement and provide an opportunity to test for immediate understanding, relevance and support. The target audience can be selected to include influential participants and the public diplomacy messages can be communicated accurately.

Table 9 sets out some guidance on engagement with individuals or groups. It is not exhaustive nor a substitute for the full implementation of the Framework described in this document. It is intended as a quick overview of the relevant issues, possible data collection methods and tools, and typical research questions.

Table 9: Engagement with Individuals or Groups

Example activities	• Conferences for influential delegates • Seminars for policy makers, opinion leaders and experts etc. • Visits to organization HQ • Flagship visits to Nations • Peer-to-peer engagement • Cooperative programmes of conferences and events within other nations • Interaction with networks of opinion formers, academics, bloggers, etc.	
Notes	• Engagement is about developing relationships, partnerships, interactions and dialogue. The primary target audiences will be opinion formers and multipliers; the secondary target audience will be the more general public they may represent or affect. • Online qualitative engagement methods provide opportunities to interact effectively with dispersed opinion formers and other target audiences.	
Typical Objectives	Impact	• “The majority of {country} politicians vote in favour on issues that support the ongoing funding of the {organization}.”
	Outcome	• “At least 65% of {country} politicians understand and agree with the rational of the {organization}.”
	Output	• “Following the major event in {country}, participants will: know the overall mission of the {organization}, know about the specific policies {x} and {y}, and identify {z} number of political trends explained at the event”.

Typical Evaluation Questions	• To what extent was {organization policy x} effectively communicated to the {conference} participants? o *Needs a (quantified) qualitative method from a sample of 100+ individuals, preferably in near real time.* • To what extent do visits to {organization HQ} contribute to a better understanding of {organization purpose}? o *Needs a qualitative method from a sample of 20+ individuals, and will demand some time cost from them.* • To what degree do {academics} in the {specific policy field} affect the awareness of their {secondary target audience}? o *Needs a (quantified) qualitative method from a sample of 100+ individuals.* • To what extent does the {organization office} in {country} contribute to the understanding of {organization policy x} within the {country's opinion formers} target audience? o *Needs a qualitative method from a sample of 20+ individuals, and will demand some time cost from individuals.*		
Data Collection Methods and Tools	METHOD & TOOLS		
	Formative Evaluation	Output Evaluation	Impact/Outcome Evaluation
	• Desk research • Face-to-face or telephone interviews with opinion formers • Online interviews • Traditional focus groups • Online focus groups • Online panels of opinion formers • Narrative inquiry • Social media monitoring and analysis	• Observation • Live feedback during a conference (App or web based) linked to an online survey platform • Conference exit polls • Follow-up online surveys • Narrative inquiry • Social media monitoring	• Semi-structured Interviews • Online interviews • Online panels of opinion formers • Online surveys • Omnibus polls • Narrative inquiry • Social media monitoring • Media content analysis

MASS COMMUNICATIONS

Mass communications usually involves the one-way communication of information. This communication can be through online and traditional formats. Online media formats may include the organization's website, a multi-media library, videos, and information with commentary on relevant events. Traditional media formats may include press releases, the broadcast of TV and radio content as well as printed materials.

A key purpose of mass communications is to inform and influence the perceptions of a wider audience, which in itself helps to build and maintain the brand image of the organization with its public audiences.

24-hour media operations are a common requirement for large international organizations that need to inform the public about their activities or to manage their reputation during the aftermath of adverse press comments or significant events. The planning and evaluation of these fast moving day-to-day activities are too short term to be covered by this Framework. However, the day-to-day press and media activities must be coherent with achieving the longer term goals. A 24-hour media cycle allows an organization to react to news events as they occur in a way that is in keeping with the longer-term desired outcomes and impacts.

Table 10 sets out some guidance on mass communications. It is not exhaustive or a substitute for the full implementation of the Framework described in this document. It is intended as a quick overview of the relevant issues, possible data collection methods and tools, and typical research questions.

Table 10: Mass Communications

<table>
<tr><td>Example activities</td><td colspan="2">• Website
• Online products
• Multimedia and A/V products
• Printed materials
• Traditional media activities
• Press conferences and releases
• Media relations in connection with major events; pre- and post-analysis
• Social media network activities</td></tr>
<tr><td>Notes</td><td colspan="2">• These activities are about traditional and digital outreach and are very similar to the normal communications of marketing, public relations and public affairs. Evaluation of these mass communication public diplomacy activities is well documented.
• The evaluation of effective media engagement—and the resulting outcomes and impact—is possible under this Framework.
• Unlike several other activities which are not ongoing, the mass communication methods tend to be continuous and can be adjusted over time in the light of evaluation results.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Typical Objectives</td><td>Impact</td><td>• “x% of public opinion in {country y} agrees with {y statements} about the {activities of the organization}”.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Outcome</td><td>• “That awareness of {the organization} should increase by y% among tertiary educated adults under age 40 in {country z} during the next 2 years”.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Output</td><td>• “The website visits increase by 15% as a result of {social media activity x}”.
• “Press media positive sentiment increases to {y%} as a result of {media campaign z}”.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Typical Evaluation Questions</td><td colspan="2">• To what extent does the activity {website} contribute to achieving the objective {to improve the target public’s knowledge of {security} issues?
o Needs quantitative methods to a sample of 400+ individuals.
• To what extent does this strategy of {tweets} respond to the information needs of {target audience x}?
o Needs quantitative and qualitative methods to a sample of 400+ individuals.
• How effective is the mass communications strategy {media mix} in improving the {awareness and knowledge} of {target audience y}?
o Needs quantitative and qualitative methods to a sample of 400+ individuals.
• How cost efficient is the {multimedia tools} in communicating the {key messages}?
o Needs quantitative methods to a sample of 400+ individuals.
• To what extent did the {/event/activity} affect the awareness and attitude of journalists and opinion leaders about the organization’s {policy}?
o Answering this question needs a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods from a sample of 100+ individuals with limited time cost to them.
• To what extent did public opinion about {activity} change as a result of the {media management}?
o Needs mostly (quantified) qualitative methods from a large sample of 400+ individuals</td></tr>
</table>

	Method & Tools:		
	Formative Evaluation	Output Evaluation	Impact/Outcome Evaluation
Data Collection Methods and Tools	• Desk research • Web analytics • Social media monitoring and analysis • Observations • Narrative inquiry • Print and broadcast media monitoring and analysis • Traditional focus groups • Online focus groups • Omnibus surveys	• Web analytics • Social media monitoring and analysis • Observations (e.g. accompanied surfing) • Narrative inquiry • Print and broadcast media monitoring and analysis • Omnibus surveys	• Desk research • Observation • Web analytics • Social media monitoring and analysis • Narrative inquiry • Print and broadcast media monitoring and analysis • Digital product & satisfaction surveys • Traditional focus groups • Interviews with stakeholders, journalists and other actors • Online focus groups • Omnibus surveys

Useful Links to Potential Tool Vendors

There are a number of suppliers of research services and tools. The choice will depend on procurement and capability considerations. It is highly likely that the list of available suppliers will change with time and some of the proprietary methodologies they use will also change. The list below provides some useful links of supplies mentioned in this handbook to illustrate the types of services that are available. The inclusion of these suppliers is not an endorsement of their services.

Traditional Media Monitoring & Analysis

www.Cision.com

www.Kantarmedia.com

www.burson-marsteller.com

Social Media Monitoring & Analysis

As above +

www.Radian6.com

www.Klout.com

Web Analytics

www.google.com/analytics

www.Radian6.com

Online Qualitative Research

www.itrack.com,

www.visionlive.com

Narrative Inquiry

www.cognitive-edge.com

Surveys (incl. Omnibus)

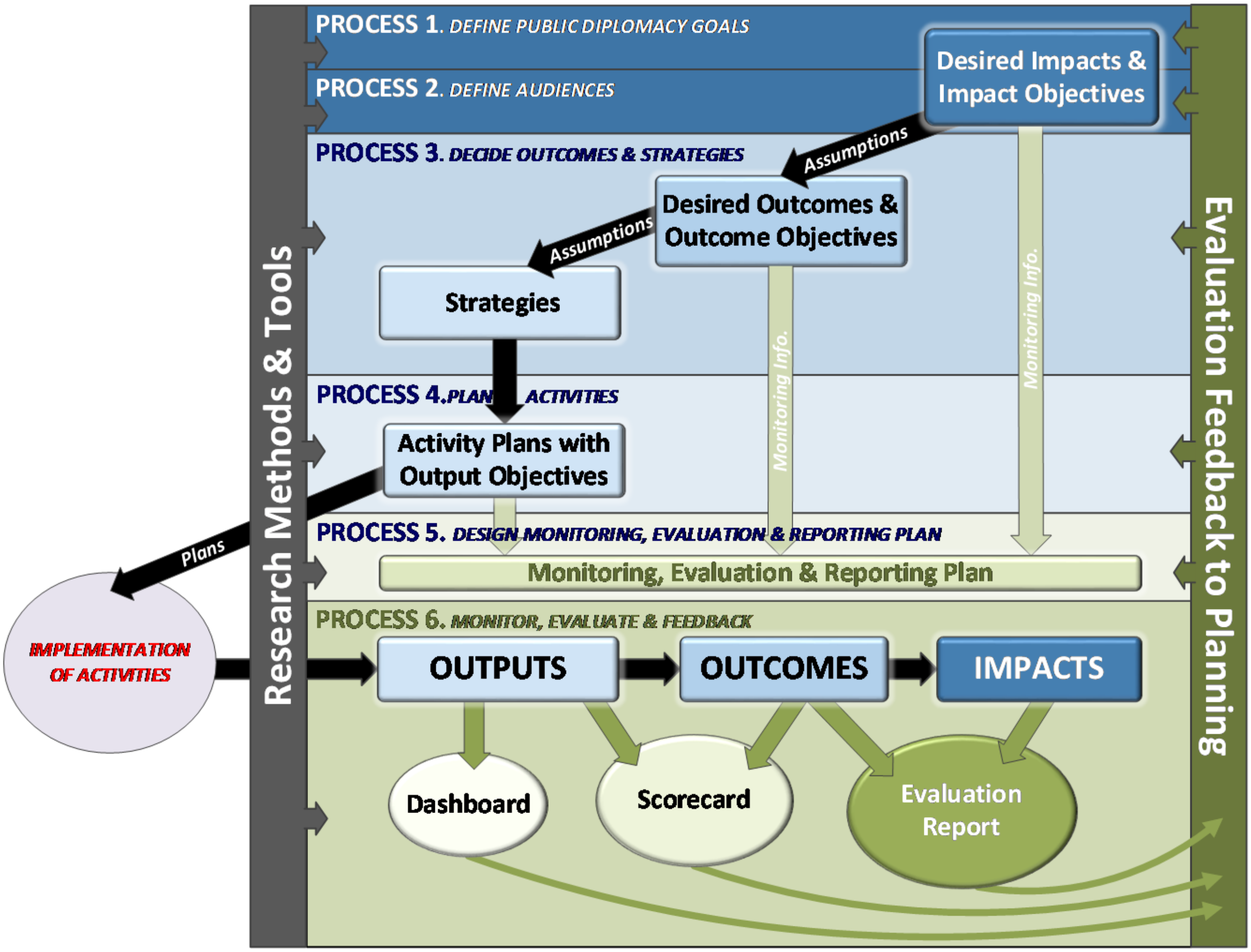
www.wingia.com

www.TBSGlobal.com

www.ipsos-mori.com

www.gfknop.com

The Framework Diagram – Print Version



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Annex A

Framework Planning Process Worksheets

These worksheets can be downloaded from the JALLC website www.jallc.nato.int. An example set of completed worksheets can be found in Annex B.

Worksheet 1 – Describe the Public Diplomacy Goals

Goal Description	**Indicators of Success**
G1.	✓
G2.	✓
G3.	✓
G4.	✓

Worksheet 2 – Describe the Target Audiences

Audience Description	**Applicable Goal**
A1.	G1☐, G2☐, G3☐, G4☐
A2.	G1☐, G2☐, G3☐, G4☐
A3.	G1☐, G2☐, G3☐, G4☐
A4.	G1☐, G2☐, G3☐, G4☐

Audience Research Questions (Additional research questions & knowledge gaps): c.f. to Data Collection Plan

Reference & Description	*Comments*	*Source*	*Research Tools*

Worksheet 3A – Strategic Matrix of Desired Impacts

Impacts connect goals with audiences. There may be more than one desired impact in a strategic combination of goals and audience. Some goals may not be relevant to some audiences. Each desired impact will require its own plan. The impacts shown in the cells are for illustration only.

Goals

		G1	**G2**	**G3**	**G4**
Audiences	**A1**	Impact 1			
	A2		Impact 2		
	A3				

WORKSHEET 3B – DESIRED IMPACT, DESIRED OUTCOMES AND THE THEORY OF CHANGE.

- Fill in the boxes below the desired impact (from top to bottom) with a sequence of assumptions and desired outcomes.
- Complete the right hand column (from bottom to top and left to right) with the conditions required to achieve the desired outcomes (in the same row) – these will guide the choice of strategies and can be measured with KPIs to permit evaluation.
- If the desired impact has another 'branch' of desired outcomes then the worksheet can be modified to add more columns.
- The 'sub-outcomes' in the right hand column can have their own underlying theory of change if they are at such a level that requires a separate line of planning – use a new worksheet.

The Logical Theory of Change	Through creating conditions which lead to…
Desired Impact DI 1:	DI 1.1
ASSUMPTION AS 1.1:	
Desired Outcome DO 1.1:	DO 1.2 plus; DO 1.1.1 DO 1.1.2
ASSUMPTION AS 1.2:	
Desired Outcome DO 1.2:	DO 1.2.1 DO 1.2.2
ASSUMPTION AS 1.3:	
Expand worksheet for more levels of desired outcome if necessary	

Strategies	By Whom
S 1.1	
S 1.2	
S 1.3	
S 1.4	

WORKSHEET 3C – DEVELOP EACH OBJECTIVE AND KPI.

DESIRED IMPACT DI 1 (Each desired impact requires a separate worksheet)

Description: Priority: H ☐, M☐, L☐

KPI Description	*Units*	*Measures*	*Data Source*	*Monitoring Tools*	*Freq. Report*	*Base-line & Notes*	*Target*	*End Date*	*Mile-stone*	*By Date*
K 1										

Impact Objective IO 1. :

Desired Outcome DO 1.1 Description:

KPI Description	*Units*	*Measures*	*Data Source*	*Monitoring Tools*	*Freq. Report*	*Base-line & Notes*	*Target*	*End Date*	*Mile-stone*	*By Date*
K 1.1										
K 1.1.1										
K1.1.2										

Other Research (Additional research questions & knowledge gaps): c.f. to Data Collection Plan

KPI Ref and Topic	*Research Question*	*Source*	*Research Tools*
1.1a			
1.1b			

Outcome Objective OO 1.1 :

SMART Check: S ☐, M☐, A☐, R☐, T☐

Desired Outcome DO 1.2 Description:										
KPI Description	*Units*	*Measures*	*Data Source*	*Monitoring Tools*	*Freq. Report*	*Base-line & Notes*	*Target*	*End Date*	*Mile-stone*	*By Date*
K 1.2										
K 1.2.1										
K1.2.2										

Other Research (Additional research questions & knowledge gaps): c.f. to Data Collection Plan			
KPI ref & Description	*Comments*	*Source*	*Research Tools*
1.2a			
1.2b			

Outcome Objective OO 1.2:

SMART Check: S ☐, M☐, A☐, R☐, T☐

WORKSHEET 4 – PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ACTIVITY PLAN

Desired Impact	Strategy	Who leads?	Public Diplomacy Activities	Output			
				KPIs	Target	Objectives	Monitoring
DI 1	S1.1		S1.1.1				
			S1.1.2.				
			S1.1.3				
	S1.2		S1.2.1.				
			S1.2.2.				
			S1.2.3				
	S1.3		S1.3.1.				
			S1.3.2				
DI 2	S2.1		S2.1.1				
			S2.1.2				

WORKSHEET 5A – EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION PLAN

Evaluation Question	Stakeholders	Indicators of Success	Research Method/Tool	Data Sources
E 1.1				
E1.2				
E1.3				
E1.4				

WORKSHEET 5B – MONITORING PLAN DATA COLLECTION MATRIX

IMPACT OBJECTIVE IO 1 (and its underlying objectives) Bring forward the data collection requirements. (Separate matrix for each impact objective)							
	Description	*Units*	*Source*	*Method/Tools*	*How*	*Frequency*	*Reporting*
K1							
K1.1							
K1.1.1							
K1.1.2							
K1.1.3							
Other Research 1.1a							
Other Research 1.1b							
K1.2							
K1.2.1							
K1.2.2							
Other Research 1.2.a							
Activity S1.1.1							
Activity S1.1.2							
Activity S1.2.1							
Activity S1.2.2							
Activity S1.3.1							
Eval Question E1.1							
Eval Question E1.2							

WORKSHEET 5C – MONITORING & EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION SUMMARY

Use this Worksheet to collect together all of the data collection needs so they can be more easily clustered for planning. Add more rows as required.

	Interview	Focus Group	Observation	Media Content	Survey	Online Survey	Web Analytics	Social Media Monitoring & Analysis	Narrative Inquiry	Other Method
IMPACT 1										
K1										
K1.1										
K1.1.1										
Other Research 1.1a										
K1.2										
K1.2.1										
Other Research 1.2.a										
Activity S1.1.1										
Activity S1.1.2										
Evaluation Question E1.1										
IMPACT 2 – repeat rows as per IMPACT 1 as required.										

Annex B
EXAMPLE WORKSHEETS

These example Worksheets are only to demonstrate the Framework process. Although they describe NATO public diplomacy activities, they are completely fictitious and not intended to represent actual plans or objectives. Only one desired impact is followed through the Worksheets. This is not a complete example 'impact' and is intended for illustration only.

WORKSHEET 1 – DESCRIBE THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY GOALS

Goal Description	Indicators of Success
G1. To foster public trust in and support for NATO	✓ Positive public opinion
G2. To build a strategic partnership with Russia	✓ Political support
G3.	

WORKSHEET 2 – DESCRIBE THE TARGET AUDIENCES

Audience Description	Applicable Goal
A1. Post cold-war generation in member Nations	G1☒, G2☐, G3☐, G4☐
A2. Policymakers and professionals in Russia	G1☐, G2☒, G3☐, G4☐
A3.	G1☐, G2☐, G3☐, G4☐

Audience Research Questions (Additional research questions & knowledge gaps): c.f. to Data Collection Plan

Reference & Description	*Comments*	*Source*	*Research Tools*
No additional questions			

Worksheet 3A – Strategic Matrix of Desired Impacts

Impacts connect goals with audiences. There may be more than one desired impact in a strategic combination of goals and audience. Some goals may not be relevant to some audiences. Each desired impact will require its own plan.

Goals

Audiences

	G1 To foster public trust in and support for NATO	**G2** To build a strategic partnership with Russia	**G3**	**G4**
A1 Post cold-war generation in member Nations	Impact DI 1 Individuals believe that NATO is the best guarantee of their security.			
A2 Policymakers and professionals in Russia		Impact DI 2 Russian military leaders demonstrate active cooperation on anti-piracy		
A3				

Worksheet 3B – Desired Impact, Desired Outcomes and Theory of Change

- Fill in the boxes below the desired impact (from top to bottom) with a sequence of assumptions and desired outcomes.
- Complete the right hand column (from bottom to top and left to right) with the conditions required to achieve the desired outcomes (in the same row) – these will guide the choice of strategies and can be measured with KPIs to permit evaluation.
- If the desired impact has another 'branch' of desired outcomes then the worksheet can be modified to add more columns.
- The 'sub-outcomes' in the right hand column can have their own underlying theory of change if they are at such a level that requires a separate line of planning – use a new worksheet.

The Logical Theory of Change	Through creating conditions which lead to…
Desired Impact DI 1: ***Individuals believe that NATO is the best guarantee of their security.***	Desired Outcome 1.1 Being Achieved.
ASSUMPTION AS 1.1: Individuals will believe in and support the Alliance if they understand why it exists (its role, and capability relating to their security).	
Desired Outcome DO 1.1: That individuals understand why NATO exists.	Desired Outcome 1.2 *plus;* DO 1.1.1 Individuals understanding the role of the Alliance. DO 1.1.2 Individuals understanding the rational of the Alliance. DO 1.1.3 Individuals understanding the capabilities of NATO.
ASSUMPTION AS 1.2: Individuals will understand why NATO exists if they are interested enough to find out more about NATO.	
Desired Outcome DO 1.2: That individuals are interested in NATO.	DO 1.2.1 Individuals being aware of NATO. DO 1.2.2 Individuals engaging with NATO communications.
ASSUMPTION AS 1.3: Individuals will be interested in NATO if they are made aware through exposure to properly campaigned and relevant messages/information/engagement etc.	

Strategies	By Whom
S1.1 Use online media to publish information to explain NATO's role and rational and compelling messages about regional security provision.	**A**
S1.2 Engage national educators to establish NATO and global security as a curriculum subject.	**B**
S1.3 Offline media campaign of releases explaining NATO's ongoing role post Afghanistan.	**C**

WORKSHEET 3C – DEVELOP EACH OBJECTIVE AND KPI

DESIRED IMPACT DI 1										
Description: **Individuals believe that NATO is the best guarantee of their security.**								Priority: H ☒, M☐, L☐		
KPI Description	*Units*	*Measures*	*Data Source*	*Monitoring Tools*	*Freq. Report*	*Base-line & Notes*	*Target*	*End Date*	*Mile-stone*	*By Date*
K1. Level of agreement about their perceived security under NATO	%	"To what extent do you agree that…" (Likert scale)	Public (post cold war generation in member Nations)	Survey (Omnibus)	Annual	*40%* (from last year's survey)	65%	10/201x		
Impact Objective IO 1. 65% of the member Nation post cold war individuals believe that NATO is the best guarantee of their security by end 201x.										
Desired Outcome DO 1.1 Description: That individuals understand why NATO exists.										
KPI Description	*Units*	*Measures*	*Data Source*	*Monitoring Tools*	*Freq. Report*	*Base-line & Notes*	*Target*	*End Date*	*Mile-stone*	*By Date*
K1.1 Degree of understanding why NATO exists	%	*"To what extent do you understand that…" (Likert scale)*	Public (post cold *war* generation in member Nations) Students (special group within target)	Survey (Omnibus or online) Narrative inquiry: 'sense-making'	Annual Qtly.	Not known. So, purchase questions in Int. Omnibus Not known. So, use first pass.	70% 80%	10/*201x*		
K1.1.1 Understanding *role* of Alliance	%	"To what extent do you …" (Likert scale) Agreement with statements stating roles – crisis mgt etc.	Public (post cold war generation in member Nations)	Survey (Omnibus or online)	Annual	Not known. So, purchase questions in Int. Omnibus	70%	10/201x		

K1.1.2 Understanding *rational* of Alliance	%	"To what extent do you …" (Likert scale) Agreement with statements stating rational.	Public (post cold war generation in member Nations)	Survey (Omnibus or online)	Annual	Not known. So, purchase questions in Int. Omnibus	70%	10/201x		
K1.1.3 Understanding *capabilities* of Alliance	%	" To what extent do you …" (Likert scale) Agreement with statements stating capabilities.	Public (post cold war generation in member Nations)	Survey (Omnibus or online)	Annual	Not known. So, purchase questions in Int. Omnibus	70%	10/201x		

Other Research (Additional research questions & knowledge gaps): c.f. to Data Collection Plan

KPI Ref and Topic	*Research Question*	*Source*	*Research Tools*
1.1.a Public attitudes	Discover public attitudes towards NATO for improved knowledge and understanding	Social media	Content analysis
1.1.b Policymakers' and professionals' attitudes	Discover key opinion former current attitudes for improved knowledge and understanding	Individuals	Interviews Focus groups

Outcome Objective OO 1.1 By end 201x that at least 70% of the member Nation post cold war generation will understand why NATO exists (its role, rational and capability).

SMART Check: S ☒, M☒, A☐, R☒, T☒ note: Achievability will depend on the actual baseline when measured.

Desired Outcome DI 1.2 Description: **That individuals are interested in NATO.**

KPI Description	*Units*	*Measures*	*Data Source*	*Monitoring Tools*	*Freq. Report*	*Base-line & Notes*	*Target*	*End Date*	*Mile-stone*	*By Date*
K1.2 Degree of *public* interest in NATO	*%*	"To what extent are you interested in…" (Likert scale)	Public (post cold war generation in member Nations) Students (special group within target)	Survey (Omnibus or online) Online survey	Annual Annual	50% - from last year's survey	75%	10/201x	65%	9/201y

K1.2.1 Degree of awareness of NATO	%	"To what extent are you aware of …" (Likert scale) Agreement with statements testing awareness about specific aspects.	Public (post cold war generation in member Nations)	Survey (Omnibus or online)	Annual	75% - from last *year's* survey	90%	10/201x		
K1.2.2 Degree of engagement with NATO comms	%	KPI calculated as an average of answers to questions about awareness, usage and satisfaction with main comms pieces.	Public (post cold war generation *in member* Nations)	Survey (Omnibus or online)	Annual	35% - mean *score* from last year's survey	70%	10/*201x*		

Other Research (Additional research questions & knowledge gaps): c.f. to Data Collection Plan

Description	*Comments*	*Source*	*Research Tools*
1.2.a. What are the main security concerns of the target *audience* – and how does this vary across the Nations?	Essential knowledge for planning communication content and tone	*Students* *Target audience*	Narrative inquiry Online surveys Focus groups Social media content analysis

Outcome **Objective OO 1.2 By end 201x that at least 75% of the member Nation post cold war generation will have an interest in NATO – and in finding out more.** SMART Check: S ☒, M☒, A☒, R☒, T☒

WORKSHEET 4 – PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ACTIVITY PLAN

The Public Diplomacy Activity plan should include a description of input resources but this is not part of this evaluation framework and is not included here. The impact objectives and outcome objectives have been described and they are linked to public diplomacy activities (tactical) by a series of public diplomacy strategies. The public diplomacy strategies described below are for illustration and are not intended to represent a complete activity plan.

Desired Impact	Strategy	Who leads?	Public Diplomacy Activities	Output			
				KPIs	Target	Objectives	Monitoring
DI 1	S1.1	A/ JSB	S1.1.1 Create and publish a series of short video articles explaining major conflicts and operations since WW2 and NATO role and effects. Available on NATO site.		12/201x	Create series by end 201x	Observation
		A/ KMB	S1.1.2. Promote series by social media channels.	No of views No of tweets	x/month y/month	Achieve x views/month Achieve y tweets/month	Google analytics Radian6
	S1.2	A/ JSB	S1.2.1. Create a NATO educational pack of learning materials. All member Nation languages.	Number distributed	06/201x 150 by 12/201x	Create pack by 06/201x Distribute 150 packs by 12/201x	Observation Observation
		B/ DWS	S1.2.2. Engage national educators with visits	Number of Nations considering using pack.	X during 201x	Productive dialogue with x Nations in 201x	Observation
	S1.3	C/ JW	S1.3.1. Releases to key media telling story of withdrawal of ISAF and planned ongoing NATO support.	% of releases taken	80%	To achieve 80% of take up	Media analysis

WORKSHEET 5A – EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION PLAN

Research questions of a broad scope and not included in the impact objective Worksheets should be entered into this plan.

Evaluation Question	Stakeholders	Indicators of Success	Research Method/Tool	Data Sources
E1.1 To what extent does the NATO website contribute to achieving the objective to improve the target public's understanding of NATO's role, rational and capabilities in providing security to the region?	ABC	Outputs vs targets Awareness K 1.2.1 Understanding K1.1 Knowledge Satisfaction Site usage	Output KPIs Online Survey & Focus Groups Web analytics	Users
E1.2 To what extent does NATO TV and the series on conflict respond to the information needs of target audience?	ABC	Outputs vs targets Understanding K1.2.1 Satisfaction	Output KPIs Online Survey Social media analysis	Users
E1.3 To what extent do visits to HQ contribute to a better understanding of NATO's education ambitions?	ABC/DEF	Outputs vs targets Understanding Support Action	Output KPIs Interviews Visit/event surveys Observation	Educator policymakers

WORKSHEET 5B – MONITORING PLAN DATA COLLECTION MATRIX

IMPACT OBJECTIVE IO 1 (and its underlying objectives) Bring forward the data collection requirements. (Separate matrix for each impact objective)

	Description	*Units*	*Source*	*Method/Tools*	*How*	*Frequency*	*Reporting*
K1	Level of perceived security under NATO	% Agreement	Post cold war generation public in member Nations	Survey	Omnibus outsourced	Annual as part of a consolidated survey of public opinion	Annual
K1.1	Understanding of why NATO exists	% Understanding	Post cold war generation public in member Nations	Survey	Omnibus outsourced Baseline from initial limited omnibus	Annual as part of a consolidated survey of public opinion 'Initial one-off'	Annual During planning
			Students in tertiary education within member Nations	Survey	Online Narrative inquiry	Annual student opinion survey Ongoing	Annual Quarterly
K1.1.1	Understanding the role of Alliance	% Understanding	Post cold war generation public in member Nations	Survey	Omnibus outsourced Online	Annual as part of a consolidated survey of public opinion 6 months	Annual 6 months
K1.1.2	Understanding the rational of Alliance	% Understanding	Post cold war generation public in member Nations	Survey	Omnibus outsourced Online	Annual as part of a consolidated survey of public opinion 6 months	Annual 6 months
K1.1.3	Understanding the capability of Alliance	% Understanding	Post cold war generation public in member Nations	Survey	Omnibus outsourced Online	Annual as part of a consolidated survey of public opinion 6 months	Annual 6 months
Other Research 1.1a	General public attitudes towards NATO	Topic + or – or neutral	Target Audience	Social media content analysis	Radian6, Klout, Others	Weekly or as required for planning	Weekly, Quarterly
Other Research 1.1b	Opinion former attitudes towards NATO	Topic + or – or neutral	Relevant policymakers and professionals	Interviews Focus Groups	Telephone, informal and semi-structured Online groups	During planning as required Annual	During planning Annual

K1.2	Public interest in NATO	% Interested	Post cold war generation public in member Nations	Survey	Omnibus outsourced	Annual as part of a consolidated survey of public opinion	Annual
			Students in tertiary education within member Nations	Survey	Online Narrative inquiry	Annual student opinion survey Ongoing	Annual Quarterly
K1.2.1	Degree of awareness of NATO	% Awareness	Post cold war generation public in member Nations	Survey	Omnibus outsourced	Annual as part of a consolidated survey of public opinion	Annual
K1.2.2	Degree of engagement with NATO comms	%. Calculated as an average of awareness, usage and satisfaction scores	Post cold war generation public in member Nations	Survey	Omnibus outsourced Online	Annual as part of a consolidated survey of public opinion	Annual
Other Research 1.2.a	Main security concerns of target audience	Various	Students Target Audience.	Survey Focus groups Social media	Online Narrative inquiry Radian6, Klout,	As required for planning Ongoing As required for planning Weekly	Planning Quarterly Planning Weekly, Quarterly
Activity S1.1.1	Create short series of operation videos – NATO role and effects	Number	Branch A	Observation		Quarterly	Quarterly
Activity S1.1.2	Promote through social media channels	Views/month Tweets/month Hits from source	www	Google analytics Social media analysis	In house with Radian6 integration	Ongoing	Monthly, Quarterly
Activity S1.2.1	Learning material pack campaign	Number distributed	Admin Website	Observation Web analytics	In house	Ongoing	Monthly, Quarterly
Activity S1.2.2	Engage national educators	Number of: nations/ organizations take-up	Admin	Observation (counts) Interview	In house Semi-structured	Ongoing After burst	Monthly, Quarterly 6 months
Activity S1.3.1	Targeted press releases	Number/reach Positive sentiment	Offline media	Media analysis Content analysis	Kantar media, Cision or similar	Ongoing	Weekly
Eval Question E1.1	To what extent does the NATO website contribute to achieving the objective to improve the target public's awareness and understanding of NATO's role in providing security to the region?	% Increase	Users KPIs Website	Survey online Focus groups Web analytics	Tracking questions on; Awareness Knowledge Understanding Satisfaction Discuss same parameters as above In house	Annual survey One-off research for evaluation During evaluation	Annual Annual

Eval Question E1.2	To what extent does NATO TV and the series on conflict respond to the information needs of target audience?	% Increase	Users	Survey online Social media analysis	Tracking questions on; Satisfaction Understanding forwards, likes etc.	Annual survey Ongoing	Annual Quarterly
Eval Question E1.3	To what extent do visits to HQ contribute to a better understanding of NATO's education ambitions?	% Increase	Visitors	Interview Visit surveys Observation	Tracking questions on; Understanding Support Action	After activity burst	When completed

WORKSHEET 5C – MONITORING & EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION SUMMARY

Use this Worksheet to collect together all of the data collection needs so they can be more easily clustered for planning.

	Interview	Focus Group	Observation	Media Content	Survey	Online Survey	Web Analytics	Social Media Monitoring & Analysis	Narrative Inquiry	Other Method
IMPACT IO 1										
K1					Annual Omni					
K1.1					Annual Omni	Annual			Yes	
K1.1.1					Annual Omni	6 months				
K1.1.2					Annual Omni	6 months				
K1.1.3					Annual Omni	6 months	Yes			
Other Research 1.1a								Yes		
Other Research 1.1b	Yes	Yes								
K1.2					Annual Omni	Annual			Yes	
K1.2.1					Annual Omni					
K1.2.2					Annual Omni	Annual		Yes		
Other Research 1.2.a		Yes				Annual		Yes		
Activity S1.1.1			Yes							
Activity S1.1.2							Yes	Yes		
Activity S1.2.1			Yes				Yes			
Activity S1.2.2	Yes		Yes							
Activity S1.3.1				Yes						
Eval Question E1.1		Yes				Annual	Yes			
Eval Question E1.2						Annual	Yes	Yes		
Eval Question E1.3	Yes		Yes		Visit survey					
IMPACT IO 2										

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