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(IN)FORMING CONFLICT PREVENTION, RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION: THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN VIOLENT CONFLICT (INFOCORE)

Effective and Coherent Media-related Communication During War and Armed Conflicts.

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This policy brief summarises the first findings from the initial stage of the INFOCORE's Work Package (WP) No. 6 ('Strategic Communication') and presents first recommendations for effective and coherent media-related communication of political actors/authorities/institutions and NGOs active in the field of conflict prevention, management and resolution.

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In this policy brief, suitable strategies are recommended for communicating effectively toward different media (local, national, international, print, online, electronic) during conflict. According to INFOCORE's principles, this policy brief has been written for direct use by two key actor types, each of which plays a key role in managing violent and armed conflicts[1]: **(1) NGOs** and **(2) political actors/authorities/institutions**[2] (particularly, the EU/EC and its international partners) active in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

> *"Owing to the specifications in INFOCORE's negotiated DoW, our recommendations in this policy brief must fit two very different communicating entities: NGOs and political actors. This will necessarily produce some haziness."*

(1) NGOs: Conflict-related news, intelligence and advocacy relayed by NGOs play a crucial role in shaping the perceptions and actions of policy, military and non-governmental actors, especially inside conflict areas. Owing to their specialised knowledge of the situation, NGOs are key actors in conflicts. They are professional information brokers that use their own source networks to assist in dialogue, peace-building, conflict mediation and prevention. When interacting with various media, both at the grassroots level in conflict areas and in the international arena, they typically enjoy greater credibility and trust with journalists than political actors do. However, the number of NGOs has expanded exponentially during the last two decades, which has led to an increasingly fierce competition among NGOs for funding. As a result, NGOs are now more than ever competing for communicative sovereignty over (problem/issue) definition and resolution. Against this background, the purpose of NGOs' media relations has expanded.

(2) Political actors/authorities: Research shows that **political actors/authorities** help to produce conflict-related news by communicating strategically with the media. They also shape the opportunity structures of journalists for war reporting and are exerting strong influence during conflict times – often attempting to instrumentalise the media for their own agendas. Through its treaties and strategic documents, the European Union (as a particular political actor) strongly emphasises the prevention of violent conflict and promoting peace in Europe and beyond its borders (cf. Gothenburg Program 2001; Treaty of Lisbon 2009, Art10a). Its greatest strengths lie in its preventive approach and its reliance on non-military instruments. Against this backdrop, the media is particularly relevant for the EU, for at least two reasons:

- First, the — international and local — media can play key roles in shaping dynamics on the ground and can thus be crucial to the failure or success of long-term peace-building and short-term instruments such as mediation. Cooperating with media is a key component of successful conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building policy initiatives.
- Second, where and when the EU acts primarily depends on where member states decide to focus their attention and resources; this factor is influenced by *mediated* public debates.

Both NGOs and the EU are cooperating with media, because they (rightly) assume that this is a key component of successful conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building initiatives. Beyond this mutually shared aim, politicians want to be re-elected and NGOs are expanding the purpose of their media relations to ensure their continued existence and viability.

BASELINE ASSUMPTIONS

Our recommendations for enhanced media communication of these two key actors are basing upon the following assumptions: **(1) the transformation of the global media landscape** (the rise of social media and new communication technologies, new non-Western transnational broadcasting, the precariousness of traditional journalism, the scarcity of resources in mass media in particular cutbacks to foreign correspondents, and outsourcing production owing to dwindling advertising revenues, and NGOs and not-for-profit

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[1] For INFOCORE's definition of *conflict*, see http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/def_conflict.pdf and http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/def_violent-conflict.pdf
[2] For INFOCORE's definition, see http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/def_Strategic_Communicator-_-Strategic-Communication.pdf

media seeking to fill the gap[3], etc.); **(2) the changing nature of strategic communication[4] worldwide** (e.g. the massive increase in new forms of propaganda and disinformation as well as new forms of their distribution); **(3) the changing nature of violent conflict** (e.g. new issues are being contested by new actors with new tactics, the rise of terrorism). These three

"BASELINE ASSUMPTIONS I:
► transformation of the global media landscape
► changing nature of strategic communication worldwide
► changing nature of violent conflict itself"

initial frame conditions mean that, today more than ever, security governance and related actions in the political field and the engagement of NGOs must include **responsible, coherent and reliable public communication**. Snow and Taylor (2006) describe the 21st century information environment as a space in which "truisms compete with alternative truths" and that for a truth to prevail, it must be perceived as more 'credible' than its alternative (p. 406).[5] This is why we consider *evidence* to be a key performance criterion

"BASELINE ASSUMPTIONS II:
► 'Evidence' = key performance criterion for the accuracy of conflict communication; as a result…
► 'Evidence' = core concept of media-related communication by political actors and NGOs active in the field of conflict prevention, management and resolution.
*► **WP6 puts the quality of NGOs' and political actors' communication with media/journalists into the focus of recommendations**."*

for accurate conflict communication and thus as a core concept of all media-related communication by political actors and NGOs in this field. Without evidence, the messages offered to the media by NGOs and political actors risk being perceived by journalists as merely a representation of particular interests or even as propaganda. For NGOs, evidence has an even greater importance: it is essential not only for advocacy towards political decision-makers and various publics but also towards donors. Evidence as a core concept of NGOs' strategic media-related communication contributes to their continued existence and viability.

Furthermore, research by INFOCORE (WP7)[6] has shown that the qualities of available source materials influence journalists' everyday practices and routines. Other research[7] has shown that the qualities of media relations determine the power and success of political communication (for example, why and how the media adopt an NGO's or a political actor's communication input/standpoint). As a result, we made the quality of NGOs' and political actors' communication with media/journalists the focus of our recommendations for a professionalisation of their media relations.

RESEARCH RESULTS: WP6

(1) NGOs: Public discourse is a competitive evidence environment in which strategic communicators/actors compete for sovereignty over (problem/issue) definition and resolution. In these competitive evidence environments, the 'evidence' (= transparency of sources/origin) of media-related organisational communication and their 'epistemic status' (= transparency concerning the (un)certain status of an evidential claim)[8] are key criteria not only of their normative quality but also of their influence. The findings of our computer-based content analysis (for methodological details, see the section on research parameters) showed that the normative quality of NGOs' evidential claims – evaluated according to the quality and quantity of evidence provision and the number of references to (un)certainty (epistemic status) – is by far the highest in the topical domain of *violence/escalation*. However, other NGO topics did not benefit from such a comparatively high normative quality in NGOs' media-related communication. Further, local NGOs' texts (compared

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[3] Otto & Meyer (2012). Missing the story? Changes in foreign news reporting and their implications for conflict prevention. *Media, War & Conflict, 5*, 205-221.

[4] For INFOCORE's definition of *strategic communication/communicator*, see http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/def_Strategic_Communicator-_-Strategic-Communication.pdf

[5] Snow & Taylor (2006). The revival of the propaganda state: US propaganda at home and abroad since 9/11'. *International Communication Gazette, 68*, 389–407.

[6] Tenenboim-Weinblatt & Baden. (2016). Journalistic transformation. How source texts are turned into news stories. *Journalism* [Online First]. DOI: 10.1177/1464884916667873

[7] C.f. Fröhlich & Rüdiger (2006) Framing political public relations: Measuring success of political communication strategies in Germany. *Public Relations Review, 32,* 18-25.

[8] For INFOCORE's definition of *evidential claim/belief*, see http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/def_evidential-beliefs.pdf

to texts of transnational NGOs (TnNGO)) generally contain lower shares of both epistemic statuses (certainty and uncertainty). Against the backdrop of Snow and Taylor's notion of the credibility of *truth* (see above), these are problematic findings.

According to our research results, NGOs' media relations and public communication material especially needed improvement concerning indicating the sources of evidential claims (47% of all texts provide no

> *"NGOs: Results I*
> ► ***47% of all NGO texts provide no source specification;*** *(results differ among NGO types and conflict types)*
> ► ***Local NGOs' texts*** *(compared to texts of TnNGOs)* ***contain lower shares of evidence.***
> ► ***Local NGOs' texts also mention sources of evidence significantly less often than transnational ones.***
> ► ***Local NGOs' texts*** *(compared to texts of TnNGOs)* *in general contain* ***lower shares of epistemic statuses (certainty and uncertainty).****"*

source specification; results differ among NGO types and conflict types). This high share is disappointing. In our view, particularly NGOs must protect their sources under certain circumstances. However, this does not necessarily mean that they cannot provide any information about where an evidential claim stems from or why an assumption, interpretation, etc. has been made. Thus, we strongly recommend that NGOs should improve the factual character of their communication on war and armed conflict, thereby avoiding the impression that they somehow deal with factoids. This particularly applies to local NGOs compared to TnNGOs: First, local NGOs' texts generally contain lower shares of evidence. Second, their texts also mention explicit sources of evidence significantly less often than TnNGOs. The latter might have more (financial/human) resources available than local NGOs for investigation into the proof of their war-related and conflict-related claims. As a result, they might also be more assertive than local NGOs, which gives them more aplomb when dealing with uncertainty and relying on their role as experts. Since many TnNGOs target quality Western news media and therefore need to meet their normative expectations, resources, however, might only form part of the explanation. Talking of 'uncertainty': To communicate an evidential yet uncertain claim while proactively admitting to uncertainty concerning this claim is considered a persuasive strength and contributes to a communicator's general credibility.

Our study also revealed that, in international press reports[9], seven out of the 10 most referenced NGOs in media are TnNGOs (the most successful being the International Red Cross). Their overall better performance concerning evidence therefore pays off, with higher resonance quotas in international media, since our data shows a significant effect: the higher the provision of evidence in an NGO's communication texts, the higher the number of references to it in international media coverage. For local media[10] in conflict regions in which local NGOs are active (here, 50% of the 10 most referenced NGOs are local NGOs), interestingly, there is no correlation (between provision of evidence in communication texts and the number of references in media coverage). Thus, for the local media in our conflict regions, evidence in (media-related) communication material might be less important than for international media.

According to our data, NGOs who produce more communication do not automatically increase their media citation ratios in every conflict. Rather, our data allow

> *"NGOS: Result II*
> ► ***Seven out of the 10 most referenced NGOs in media coverage are TnNGOs*** *(the most successful being the International Red Cross).*
> ► *The* ***higher the provision of evidence*** *in an NGO's communication texts, the* ***higher the number of references to the NGO in international media coverage.***
> ► *For* ***local media*** *(conflict regions),* ***evidence in communication material is less important*** *than for international media.*
> ► *Concerning* ***international media, it pays off for NGOs to not communicate constantly***, *but to only do so when something very serious occurs.* ***NGOs that operate according to this pattern receive better media resonance than NGOs who produce a kind of 'continuous static'.****"*

for the following conclusion: Concerning international media, it pays off for NGOs not to communicate constantly, but only to do so when something very serious occurs. NGOs that operate according to this pattern receive better media resonance than NGOs who produce a kind of 'continuous static'.

(2) Political actors/authorities/entities: For political actors, our analysis showed similar results. Overall, the data showed that, for both international and local media, political actors who were directly involved on the ground had higher impacts on the news coverage. This was unsurprising yet noteworthy. In addition, there were no significant differences in the overall impacts of political communication between the conflicts. This means that the media is always open to political communication on conflicts, independent of the conflict context itself. Also, strategic communication deriving from political entities had higher visibility than NGO communication.

For international media, the primary predictors of political actors media resonance were the share of texts that contained evidence as well as – unlike for NGOs – the overall number of texts. The importance of the provision of evidence is again underlined by a correlation between the number of texts distributed by the political actors and the share of texts that contained evidence. It thereby remains unclear whether the number of texts influenced these communicators' success or the fact that those who created more texts also had an overall higher level of provided evidence. However, for local media,

> *"Political Actors: Results I*
> ► *Political actors who were directly involved on the ground had higher impacts on news coverage.*
> ► *Strategic communication deriving from political actors/entities had higher media visibility than NGO communication.*
> ► *There were no significant differences in the overall impacts of political communication between the six conflicts (→ the media is open to political communication on conflicts, independent of the conflict context itself).*

the data offer a less clear picture. Here, the only relevant predictor of media resonance seems to be the number of distributed texts. This might mean that, in local media, factors that were not measured played important roles, for instance, trust in political communicators, political affiliation or established relations between journalists and politicians.

> *"Political Actors: Results II*
> ► *International media: The primary predictors of political actors' media resonance were*
> ▪ *the share of texts that contained evidence*
> ▪ *the overall number of texts (unlike for NGOs!)*
> ► *Local media: The only relevant predictor of media resonance seems to be the number of distributed texts. (→ in local media, factors that were not measured might play a more important role, for instance, trust in political communicators, political affiliation or established relations between journalists and politicians)."*

(3) Gender-related findings: A further analysis of strategic persuasive texts in which male and female experts are explicitly represented/discussed/cited and/or which stem from those experts concentrated on the representation of the voices of women (in comparison to those of men). The analysis included more than 23,000 texts distributed in English, French and German and stemming from about 260 different strategic communicators (including NGOs and political actors, but also beyond these two groups). The findings revealed that the shares of female voices in strategic communication texts are extremely low for our two African conflict cases: Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The extreme underrepresentation of female voices in strategic discourses in and about these two crisis cases can be seen regardless of the provenance/origin of the analysed texts (international, EU, local communicators). This means that even strategic communicators with EU provenance are marginalising voices of African women and elide female viewpoints in their respective media-related and public communication. Sine we

> *"Gender-related Results:*
> ► *Female voices in strategic communication texts are extremely low for our two African conflict cases Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo*
> ► *The extreme underrepresentation and marginalisation of female voices in strategic discourses in these two crisis cases also applies to texts of strategic communicators with EU provenance."*

can assume that the representation of women and the proportions seen in the communicative texts of strategic communicators are also diffused in media reports (when journalists use these texts as source material), this is a problem, particularly in the context of war and armed conflict. So, the question arises

whether, in war and conflict reporting, the media picture is substantially determined by the content of strategic communications. In other words: is the inadequate representation of women in war and conflict coverage[11] due (more than previously believed) to the inadequate representation of women in media sources' communication material?

> *"Initial Recommendations (Summary):*
> *(1) NGOs and political actors/entities should **improve the factual character of their communication** on war and armed conflict, thereby **avoiding the impression that they somehow deal with factoids.** This particularly applies to local NGOs compared to transnational NGOs (TnNGO).*
> *(2) **Concerning local media, NGOs and political actors/entities should improve their relationships with local media on the ground.***
> *(3) While **constant communication pays off for political actors/entities, NGOs should not communicate constantly**, but should save valuable resources for times when something (very) serious occurs.*
> *(4) NGOs and political actors/entities should **be aware of the underrepresentation of women's voices in media in general and in war and conflict coverage in particular.** They should consider the **proactive provision of female voices and women's perspectives** in their communication material to be a **contribution to fair and balanced content production** — a key **prerequisite for de-escalative effects** of communication. In our view, **EU politicians and NGOs have a special responsibility in this regard***.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Against the backdrop of these results and on the basis of our brief notes on the changing nature of public communication and discourse, as well as on the basis of general trends in the media landscape and journalism, we will now provide specific recommendations for the professionalisation of NGOs' and political actors' strategies in the field of (de-escalative) conflict communication. Both strategic actor types can thereby enhance their credibility and the newsworthiness of their messages, ensuring better resonance quotas in media coverage. Concerning political actors, our recommendations don't focus on the EU or on EU-related political actors only, nor are our recommendations based on any evaluation of existing communication strategies of the EU, for instance the work of The Strategic Communications Division ('StratComms')[12] or the EU's international efforts to counter propaganda and disinformation[13].

In the introduction, we talked about the necessity to consider **responsible, coherent and reliable public communication as a substantial and integral part of** security governance and related actions in the political field and the engagement of NGOs. This means anticipating, from the outset, the dramatically changing setting of the emergence of public discourse and particularly the many new conditions under which media discourses arise today. There are numerous examples of (political) actions and decisions that failed because complex discourse processes conveyed by the (mass) media were not considered. In this context, we speak of *media autism*.

> *"Security governance and related actions in the political field and the engagement of NGOs must include (1) responsible, coherent and reliable public communication through (2) a sustainable strategic concept and sustainable strategic measures."*

As a result, our recommendations here focus on a ***sustainable strategic concept*** and ***sustainable* strategic measures** for the professional planning of media-related communication activities *beyond immediate specific coverage*. We deliberately refrain from making recommendations on the fundamentals of good media relations; we assume this knowledge is present; for instance, the fact that journalists always work under extreme time pressure, that they need stories that are very relevant to their readers, that they need perfect press releases that meet their professional needs and not those of a strategic communicator, or that journalists

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[11] Fröhlich (2016). Gender, media and security. In P. Robinson, P. Seib, & R. Fröhlich (eds.), *Routledge handbook of media, conflict and security (pp. 22-35).* London, New York: Routledge.

[12] https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp/100/strategic-communications_en

[13] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/578008/EXPO_IDA(2016)578008_EN.pdf

typically need immediate and direct responses to media inquiries, that professional and strategic media relations planning must clearly distinguish between the intended short-term and long-term effects of the communication and between different target audience types, including their subpublics, etc. We also refrain from suggestions concerning particular tactics or tactical concepts/measures. [14]

To further improve the media relations of NGOs and political actors, and to augment their existing communication strategies, this policy brief has two goals: First, **to improve their professional relationship with journalists/media**; second, **to improve the media resonance** of their communication activities, facilitating the insertion of dialogue-related and mediation-related content into mediated public discourse on war and armed conflicts. Here, the focus is on measures for the credibility of media relations and media-related communication (e.g. improving evidence, reliability, transparency, etc.). **The latter is extremely important in today's post-factual or post-truth era, in which information needs to be particularly credible and reliable in order to be selected by media/journalists for publication. [15]**

> *"Two general goals: (1) to improve the professional relationship with journalists/media; (2) to improve the media resonance of communication activities, facilitating the insertion of dialogue-related and mediation-related content into mediated public discourse on war and armed conflicts."*

The following suggestions refer partly to our empirical findings (see the *Introduction*) about the evidential character of NGOs' and political actors' communication (which requires improvement, as shown above), and partly incorporate key new general trends in media relations/PR and in journalism, which must be considered generally.

> *"General recommendation: Implementation of convincing 'media relations governance': A sustainable, organisationally embedded regulatory framework for the strategic management of communication activities for and with media/journalists."*

To professionalise, increase efficiency, and improve the planning of organisational communication with media (representatives), especially during violent crises and armed conflicts, we recommend **implementing convincing 'media relations governance'**, that is, a *sustainable, organisationally embedded regulatory framework for the strategic management of communication activities* for and with media (representatives).

Especially for crisis and risk scenarios, this means that strategic communication planning requires a strategic regulatory framework (= *media relations governance*) that enables strategic communicators in NGOs and among political actors to get or develop the ability to plan and manage their communication work; for instance, to offer continuous and convincing evidence for their messages. In the light of journalists' expectations of valuable media relations, the media relations governance we recommend affords NGOs and political actors the maximum resource effectiveness and media resonance.

For the principle of media relations governance we suggest for NGOs and political actors, we envisaged **six so-called 'Governing Elements (GE)**, drawn from the classic elements of general governance research [16]:

a) **Establishing and maintaining direct contact with media/journalists** (e.g. proactive rather than reactive consultations/negotiations with journalists; [17] exclusive informational events for selected journalists on highly specific topics/backgrounds; cooperation networks to avoid in-group/out-group dynamics)
b) **Continuous media monitoring** (media *system* and media *content*) (= cost-intensive!)
  b.1) formative evaluation before and during communication, for process optimisation
  b.2) summative evaluation after the communication, to measure and optimise efficiency ('return on investment')

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[14] Tactic follows strategy; tactic = actual communicative acts; for instance, the tactical decision in a certain strategic framework of a given issue to rather have a press conference than an organisational video, etc. Tactical decisions can only be made on the basis of the particularities of an individual organisation/institution, its type (for example, thinking, doing, talking NGOs), aims, resources, communicative structure, target groups, problems, etc. There is no one-size-fits-all tactic.

[15] Harsin (2015). Regimes of posttruth, postpolitics, and attention economies. *Communication, Culture & Critique, 8,* 327–333.

[16] Enderlein et al. (Eds.). (2012). Handbook on Multi-level Governance. Northampton, MA: Elgar.

[17] For instance, in the framework of so-called '*blaming and shaming'*: Negotiations/Consultations about clearly problematic cases of escalating effects of media reporting on armed conflicts and crises.

c) **Agreeing on and setting norms and values** (benchmarks) in the organisation/institution and externally for dealing with media/journalists (e.g. in a mission statement; they might for instance include a commitment to gender equity/gender-sensitive communication/reporting, etc.)

d) **Identifying and establishing best practice processes** (see the detailed recommendations on selected professional processes, techniques, measures, etc. below)

e) **Convincing with credibility:** creating and increasing trust via evidence and transparency (see the empirical findings of our work packages on 'evidence' and 'epistemic status' in the *Introduction*)

f) **Providing incentives for journalists** (newsworthiness/news factors, exclusive information/access, resource effectiveness/compensation, specialised expertise, rapid reaction times, storytelling/narratives, gender-sensitive information/reporting, etc.).

We will now recommend and describe specific best practice processes that appear prudent and necessary based on the findings in our Work Package (outlined above) and on new trends/developments in media relations/PR, journalism and social media.

PARTICULAR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF A BEST PRACTICE MODEL OF 'MEDIA RELATIONS GOVERNANCE'

(1) COOPERATION, COORDINATION AND COHERENCE

Following classic governance research, we recommend that **those responsible for and participating in media relation/media-related communication come together with those responsible for and participating in crisis management on the basis of shared norms, values and/or interests in order to achieve the common goal to conceptualise and implement effective media relations governance (GE c)**. Norms, values and interests should be regularly discussed and put to the test.

> *"Internal cooperation, coordination and coherence on the basis of shared norms, values and/or interests."*

The permanent and sustainable realisation of cooperation, coordination and coherence (in particular) is very difficult to achieve in a multinational construct such as the EU (or transnationally operating NGOs). Strong sectionalisation and departmentalisation of policy-making appears to be the primary – probably even *the* single most important – obstacle to good media relations (fragmented communication, inconsistent messages, few transnational agendas, etc.). This is even more so considering the multi-layeredness of current EU media relations communication at various levels, including NATO, the EU, its member states, and existing communicative partnerships with civil society organisations. **In the light of this, even attempts and efforts must be considered successes.**

For the EU's media-related communication, it is advisable **to enter into strategic communication partnerships and cooperation networks with selected NGOs** who achieve a high degree of credibility per se. The extent to which such NGOs are willing to enter into these partnerships and networks (not all will be) must be evaluated in individual cases.

> *"External cooperation, coordination and coherence:* **Political actors** ➔ *Implementing strategic communication partnerships and cooperation networks with selected NGOs on the basis of shared norms, values and/or interests."*

These strategic communication partnership types can be very helpful concerning timing communications (e.g. avoiding cannibalisation effects, amplifying effects with homogeneous messages) or when looking at the level/quality of evidence (NGOs used as sources of facts in media-related communication from political actors, and vice versa). **Existing partnerships are a step in the right direction. They should be strengthened and extended.** As *organisations*, NGOs have it easier than the EU concerning creating *intra*-organisational cooperation, coordination and coherence. However, for external *inter*-organisational cooperation, coordination and coherence, there are likely to be similar problems, for instance owing to the competition among NGOs (e.g. for donors) or owing to a complex transnational structure. However, cooperation, coordination and coherence are not only key requirements for implementing a comprehensive media governance model, but also for producing and providing convincing evidence in media-related communication messages **(GE e)**. **For NGOs, we therefore recommend creating the best possible**

communicative evidence networks by means of external cooperation, coordination and coherence: This should be done via cooperation among NGOs (inter-organisational) and via continual involvement and integration of NGOs' local partners and actors (extra-organisational) in compiling communicative evidence. We know that these partnership types already exist. However, from NGOs in other fields we know that these partnerships between NGOs are now under severe pressure owing to the increasing competition between NGOs.

"External cooperation, coordination and coherence:

NGOs *→ Implementing communicative evidence networks through:*

▪ inter-organisational cooperation, coordination and coherence among NGOs (on the basis of shared norms, values and/or interests)

▪ extra-organisational cooperation with continual involvement and integration of NGOs' local partners and actors (on the basis of common norms, values and/or interests)."

Cooperative networks can also be helpful for NGOs and political actors when so-called **in-group/out-group dynamics (GE a)** arise: Local in-group audiences often reject information simply because it stems from foreign out-group institutions, and vice versa.[18] To implement an agenda in public discourse or among political decision-makers, it can also be helpful to create cooperative networks among like-minded local, national, international and transnational NGOs/political actors/journalists. These cooperative communication network types can overcome the disadvantages of the described 'in-group/out-group dynamics' by targeting communication toward in-groups or out-groups, depending on the situation.

Finally, NGOs' and political actors' processes of compiling communicative evidence via cooperation should consider **cooperation with academics/scientists** (for instance, via joint regular round-tables). The media-related communication of NGOs and political actors should consistently (where suitable and available) employ scientific findings – for instance, ours concerning the fact that evidence is less important

*"**NGOs** & **Political actors:***
(1) Close cooperation with academics/scientists (for instance, via regular joint round-tables).
(2) Specific packaging and tailoring of messages for various target groups and different journalists'/media's needs and constraints."

for local media in crisis regions (see above) and recommending that, here, one should rather **invest in relationship-building with (local) media and journalists (GE a).**

Convincing media governance should consider that evidence provision needs **good packaging** (particularly academic/scientific evidence): It needs to be **specifically tailored for local, national and international journalists and needs to be professionally shaped to different journalists' and media's needs and constraints** (for instance, different news values/factors, storytelling (see further below), the provision of visuals or narratives, the provision of sources that can be consulted by individual journalists, etc.) **(GE f)**.

(2) SENSITIVITY TO CONFLICT(S) AND CULTURE(S) (GE c)

In a multinational context, successfully planned and implemented media relations governance must be **sensitive to a conflict, the culture and the particular (geopolitical) context** (**GE c**): Conveying messages and contents to international (mass) media and political decision-makers outside of the conflict and crisis region must be done in ways that are sensitive to the respective conflict and culture. **In particular, when providing analytical judgement and/or recommendations for problem-solving (beyond factual reporting),** NGOs and political actors must be aware that this could be — in a particular conflict context — **counter-productive (escalative effect).** For instance, in cases of human rights abuses to call prematurely for referral to the International Criminal Court of political or military leaders can make those actors more desperate and less willing to compromise or to negotiate, since they see no way out. Particularly from a short-term perspective, such a recommendation can be counter-productive in preventing an escalation[19] of conflict, although

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[18] Kinniburgh & Denning (2006). Blogs and military information strategy. JSOU report 5-6, June. Publication of Joint Information Operations University. Hurlburt Field, FL: The JSOU Press. Available online at http://www.au.af.mil/info-ops/jsou/blog-book06june.pdf (retrieved 30.11.2016)

[19] For INFOCORE's definition of '(de-)escalation' see http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/def_escalation-de-escalation.pdf

an ICC referral may well be appropriate or just. In this case, being sensitive to a conflict and culture means carefully considering particular conflict dynamics when planning communicative messages. From a communicator's perspective, the strategy might be to achieve justice for the victims and media resonance for himself or herself. It might be well intentioned, but with respect to the conflict development (de-escalation), it might be a better strategy to show restraint, owing to the particularly sensitive context of a conflict and its

> *"When providing analytical judgement and/or recommendations for problem-solving, de-escalative communication must be particularly sensitive to a conflict, culture and context."*

dynamics. It's the stability vs. justice dilemma. Research findings from INFOCORE's WP4 (Christoph Meyer) confirm this based on the results of in-depth interviews with NGO representatives.

Sensitivity to a conflict and culture is even more critical when conveying messages and contents to *local* **(mass) media in conflict and crisis regions**. For this, especially locally active NGOs can work to support and consult with other NGOs and political actors outside the conflict region, on condition that they are truly familiar with the particularities of the various local media and public culture concerning the media system, journalistic aspects, norms and values; for instance by conducting media monitoring (**GE b1**). Usually, NGOs in the field of media assistance have this kind of knowledge. We recommend **establishing various** *(local)* **expert teams for conflict-sensitive and culture-sensitive media relations — if possible in the affected crisis regions — that can operate as consultants on the ground for others, but also with regard to (external) international media relations.** For this, cooperation networks can be used to conserve resources when acting. **The work of such expert teams, which — in turn — advise other NGOs and political actors** (on the basics of the principles of cooperation, coordination and coherence and on the basis of shared norms, values and/or interests), can also be **useful with a view to the EU's international efforts to counter propaganda and disinformation or the Strategic Communication Division** ('**StratComs'**).

(3) THE LEGITIMACY PROBLEM

Every form of (strategic) media relations and persuasive communication first has the **'stigma of unreliability'** and a presumed **'natural lack of evidence'**. Various (political) actors' efforts to draw media attention are almost always suspected of hiding other interests not related to the topic at hand. **Good media relations governance based on norms and values must confront this problem of legitimacy (GE c):** Media governance seeks to manage public opinion by effectively steering published opinions (in the crisis regions, internationally (public diplomacy) or in their various home countries). Thus, such measures can meet resistance and generally risk causing a backlash. From the perspective of democracy theory, media relations are legitimate for the purpose of advancing particular interests.

This is true in particular in liberal scenarios with guaranteed press freedom, since in these cases the journalists take the final decisions about accepting or rejecting communication input from institutionalised sources. Socially, and from the perspective of professional journalism, any attempts to influence the media — including media relations — are sometimes considered problematic because they are attempts on the part of particular interests to influence the media. Thus, it is not advisable to deny or relativise the strategic

> *"Put your cards on the table: Good media relations governance (based on shared norms and values) acknowledges that every form of (strategic) media relations and persuasive communication has a stigma of unreliability and a presumed natural lack of evidence."*

and persuasive character of self-descriptions and self-communication. Journalists are well aware of this. **We recommend that NGOs and political actors put their cards on the table and use values and norms to develop an awareness of the problems of the legitimacy of persuasive media relations and strategic communications.**

A good conceptualisation of media relations governance *strategically* implements this problem awareness and **recognises the legitimacy of the accusation that persuasive media-related communication represents a form of interference in and influence of media content production.** That is, **good media relations governance that**

accepts and anticipates this general scepticism prob-lem – for instance, by setting a mission statement in the regulatory framework of media relations govern-ance and requiring regular training sessions on this topic for the media relations team. Good media rela-tions governance also anticipates that good journalists behave towards their sources with the appropriate de-tachment. This is a sign of professionalism, not of hos-tility or adverseness.

> *"Good media relations governance (based on shared norms and values) an-ticipates the general scepticism problem and journalists' duty of professional de-tachment – for instance, by setting a mis-sion statement in its regulatory frame-work and requiring regular training on this topic for the media relations team."*

(4) CROSS-MEDIAL NEWS DESKS/NEWSROOMS

In the last 10 years, modern journalism has changed drastically. Effective media relations governance con-siders that journalists now work across more areas and for more (different) media types (multichannel or cross-media principle) than before, that they are creating more content with the same budget (media re-source scarcity) and that they are therefore shifting towards shorter stories. The division of work focused on target groups, editorial departments and channels ('silo') has lost its importance in many media. In-stead, in many places, the so-called news desk or newsroom concept (open plan) has been introduced — a concept to which strategic media relations must adapt (adaptation to the logic of journalistic produc-tion processes) and that also offers many benefits to the performance of communication departments (GE d, f). At its core, this concept has a topic-centred approach focused on many channels and stakehold-ers, and it has replaced the editor-centred approach. Content is now produced for multiple media types (including social media), which means that strategic communicators should also plan and set their agendas in cross-medial ways. This also allows media relations to better link the content of their media relations in-ternally and externally as well as nationally and internationally.

> *"1. Adaptation to the logic of journalistic produc-tion processes*
> *2. NGOs' and political actors' communication de-partments can benefit from the introduction of the newsdesk/newsroom principle:*
> ► *Topic-centred approach instead of editor-cen-tred approach*
> ► *Focus on many channels/media types and vari-ous stakeholders*
> ► *Strategic agenda-setting in cross-medial ways*
> ► *Linking the content of media relations internally, externally, nationally and internationally*
> ► *Enables topics across the globe to be better identified, coordinated and tailored*
> ► *Amplified, global cooperation becomes closer; the exchange among teams and their reaction times become shorter*
> ► *Internal transparency increases"*

This is even more important because, in an ideal case, everyone in the team should be able to pro-vide reliable information to media inquiries — for instance, anyone in the media relations team should be able to answer questions about all pro-jects, countries and topics. For this to work, a pro-ject management system/software must be intro-duced, for instance, a social intranet in which workflows, tasks, topics, work being done on them, timeframes, communications to the media, etc. can be viewed (worldwide) by all staff mem-bers. This enables topics across the globe to be better identified, coordinated, specifically tailored and possibly even amplified; also, global coopera-tion becomes closer, the exchange among teams and their reaction times become shorter and inter-nal transparency increases.

Particular challenges of the news desk/newsroom principle are: Staff must be knowledgeable about various topics, requirements of texts and narratives from different topic areas, different media, and their various production methods. In a global/international/transnational environment, foreign language profi-ciency must be at a native level combined with journalistic skills, conflict-sensitive and culture-sensitive knowledge about the various journalistic target groups, detailed knowledge of the conflicts, etc. This de-tailed knowledge must be at least as good as that of the journalistic target group; ideally, it goes (well) be-yond that. Multinational teams in the newsrooms of strategic communicators are absolutely essential. As an alternative, external expertise must be bought on a case-by-case basis, or agencies must be used. Whether the large investment sums needed for this can be found is something that each communicator – whether an NGO or political actor – must decide for themselves.

(5) STORYTELLING AND NARRATIVES

The survey findings from INFOCORE Work Package 1 ('Journalism') show that, contrary to generally held beliefs, journalists do *not* take 'facts' and then develop and write news and reports from them, but often already have a narrative in mind that they then support with appropriate evidence (that is, facts) and rhetoric. This applies less to immediate reporting in the context of rapid, acute and definite (escalative) events of violence and aggression than to journalistic production beyond such 'hot' short-term events. WP1 summarises this under the motto '***The story comes first'***: journalists already have a rough idea of the planned story, select information on the basis of the story frame, and keep searching for sources that back their story. Furthermore, the phase beyond 'hot' short-term events is characterized by so called 'media fatigue'. It means that the quantity of war coverage declines as a conflict evolves because journalists' (and audiences') interest in the issue more and more diminishes. This can also lead to a 'compassion fatigue'[20] which is a problem in particular for NGOs (fundraising). A 'compassion fatigue' of the general public can also cause severe problems for political actors who for instance need public support for specific peace keeping actions or other relevant political decisions in the context of conflict prevention, management and resolution. **Thus, successful media relations, information and messages intended for media should rely on storytelling[21] (GE f), which means that a logical narrative is developed and offered to journalists. A news desk team should be able to tailor narratives and stories for different target groups/media types/cultures (cross-medial/multichannel storytelling). Producing input for media according to the principle *'facts first' — 'hard facts speak for themselves'* is not enough** — although this is the strategy during rapid acute and definite escalative short-term events of violence. In other words, if you want to convey facts, you first and foremost need an adequate narrative around these facts; then you add the facts into the narrative. Not the other way around.

> *"Good media relations governance (based on shared norms and values) anticipates that information and messages intended for media should rely on culture-sensitive and media-sensitive storytelling."*

> *"Good media relations governance (based on shared norms and values) realises that storytelling (like every other form of media-related and public communication) includes admitting uncertainty where it exists. To proactively admit to uncertainty is considered a persuasive strength rather than a weakness and contributes to a communicator's general credibility and to his or her role as expert role, particularly in today's post-factual/post-truth era."*

Talking of 'facts': In the results section of the *Introduction*, we touched on 'uncertainty'. To communicate an evidence-based yet uncertain claim while **proactively admitting its uncertainty is considered to be a persuasive strength and contributes to a communicator's general credibility and to his or her role as expert (GE e).** Further, to admit uncertainty is critical in the context of war and armed conflict and in the context of today's post-factual or post-truth era. To admit uncertainty also distinguishes credible information from propaganda (propaganda usually does not admit to uncertainty). Here, NGOs and political actors/entities can improve the factual basis and character of their communication on war and armed conflict by admitting uncertainty where it exists. In doing so, they avoid the impression that they somehow deal with factoids. **Thus, we advise always admitting uncertainty where it exists. This particularly applies to the practice of storytelling, which often is misunderstood as a communicative technique that does not allow for uncertainty.**

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[20] Moeller, S. D. (1999). Compassion fatigue: How the media sell disease, famine, war, and death. New York, NY: Routledge.
[21] Elmer (2011). Public relations and storytelling. In Edwards & Hodges (eds.), *Public relations, society and culture* (pp. 47-60). London, New York. Routledge.

(6) CONSIDERATION OF GENDER-SENSITIVE/GENDER-RELATED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Our findings revealed that female voices in strategic communication texts are extremely underrepresented in our African conflict cases: Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The extreme underrepresentation of women's interests in strategic discourses in and about these two crisis cases also applies to texts of strategic communicators with EU provenance. The marginalisation of voices and perspectives of African women in media-related and public communication is a problem in the context of war and armed conflict. Political actors (particularly those of EU origin) and NGOs active in conflict prevention, management and resolution (particularly in Africa) should increase awareness of the problem of women's underrepresentation in public discourse on war and armed conflict. They should use their role as media sources and should enhance female representation in media coverage by offering journalists (gender-related and/or gender-sensitive) information.

> *"Good media relations governance incorporates a gender-sensitive approach into its portfolio of shared norms and values. It is also conscious of the risk that gender-sensitive communication can lead to (undesirable and risky) appeals for the protection and sheltering of women in times of violent conflict. These notions can serve as a political or humanitarian justification for military intervention and war (escalation)."*

This can often only be achieved through intense investigation beyond the usual (male-dominated) mainstream (for instance, using specialised women networks, specialised NGOs or expert databanks). **Good media relations governance incorporates a gender-sensitive approach into its portfolio of shared norms and values (GE c, f)**. Good media relations governance also considers that a **misguided notion of gender-sensitive communication can lead to (undesirable and risky) appeals for the protection and sheltering of women in times of violent conflict.** These notions can serve as a political or humanitarian justification for military intervention and war (escalation).[22] This is why researchers criticise this gendered notion as a masculine, authoritarian idea.

(7) PARTICULAR RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING BOTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Today, a high share of social media content stems from so-called 'bots' – automated accounts (computer programs) that produce automated Twitter or other social media content. Experts estimate that 30 million Twitter accounts do not represent real people/institutions but are automated accounts; Facebook assumes that its platform has 15 million automated fake accounts.

"Bots (…) silence people and groups who might otherwise have a stake in a conversation. At the same time they make some users seem more popular, they make others less likely to speak. This spiral of silence results in less discussion and diversity in politics. Moreover, bots used to attack journal-

> *"A Good media relations governance principle pro-actively incorporates the deliberate eschewal of bots into its portfolio of 'common norms and values'."*

ists might cause them to stop reporting on important issues because they fear retribution and harassment."[23] It might be as sign of best practice **(GE d)** if strategic communicators in conflict prevention, management and resolution **proactively assert that they completely abstain from bots** (and abide by this assurance). This can contribute to their general reliability and credibility **(GE e). Good media relations governance proactively and explicitly incorporates the deliberate eschewal of bots into its portfolio of shared norms and values.**

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[22] Fröhlich (2016); see footnote 11.
[23] How Twitter bots are shaping the election. *The Atlantic,* 1 November 2016 http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/11/election-bots/506072/

Our suggestions in this policy brief are primarily based on the quantitative findings from INFOCORE's WP6. We have analysed what and how information is provided and advocated by strategic communicators and what parts of this information are taken up and disseminated by the media. The findings we have generated based on this approach allow us to recommend suitable strategies for effectively communicating to different media (local, national, international, print, online, electronic) during conflicts.

We took the understanding of 'evidence' as a key performance criterion of the accuracy and trustworthiness of conflict communication (see above) and combined it with key performance criteria described in normative PR theory as characteristic of excellent strategic communication/PR (e.g. Hon and Grunig, 1999; Seo et al. 2009)[24]. To make 'evidence' an indicator of strategic (media-related) communication's quality, we factored in six relevant approaches from normative PR theory, from which we then derived two specific criteria to measure evidence: 1) Via the construct '*epistemic status*', we examined how certainty framing vs. uncertainty framing was done in the analysed NGO PR texts. 2) With the construct '*evidence*', we analysed the de facto provision of evidence of evidential claims (= transparency of the sources of evidential claims; references as to where evidential claims stems from). Further, we conducted a special analysis of strategic communication material/texts in which male and female experts are explicitly represented and discussed and/or which stem from them. The aim was to investigate the representation of women's voices (compared to those of men).

Our study uses data from computer-assisted content analysis conducted with the help of JAmCAT[25] software. Thus, we were able to examine a wide array of texts. The evidence-related content analysis is based on text material of 65 different NGOs (33 transnational, 32 local) and of 35 different political actors. Here, we decided to concentrate on NGOs and political actors (1) that are *clearly* engaged in our three conflict regions/six conflicts, (2) that have produced a significant amount of texts/communication material, and (3) whose texts have been distributed either in English, German or French. The gender-related analysis also focussed on texts distributed in English, French and German. They stem from about 260 different strategic communicators, including NGOs and political actors but also beyond these two groups. We constructed the samples (see Tables 1 to 3) based on extensive web research and in close collaboration with INFOCORE's conflict experts,[26] its associated stakeholder network[27] and its advisory board.[28] We included NGOs' and political actors' (and for the gender-related analysis, also other strategic communicators') media-like communication means and their official media releases provided in archives of their online press rooms. To compose the specific investigation periods (see Tables 1 to 3), we relied on the INFOCORE conflict experts and the conflict descriptions by the U.N., BBC and Timelines of History (http://timelines.ws). For the evidence-related content analysis, we gathered 16,262 texts from NGOs and 18,888 from political actors. The gender-related analysis is based on 23,246 texts from diverse types of strategic communicators. We turned all the texts were turned into machine-readable data.[29] The following tables provide an overview of the three samples of texts stemming from the public communication and media relations material of NGOs (Table 1), from political actors (Table 2) and from all of WP6's strategic communicators (Table 3). We analysed these texts (more than 85,000) by means of JAmCAT and Python scripts.

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[24] Hon & Grunig (1999). *Guidelines for measuring relationships in public relations*. Gainesville, FL: Institute for Public Relations. Seo & Yang (2009). Global activism and new media: A study of transnational NGOs' online public relations. *Public Relations Review 35*: 123–126. DOI:10.1016/j.pubrev.2009.02.002.

[25] http://jamcat.mscc.huji.ac.il/accounts/login/?next=/

[26] http://www.infocore.eu/expert-directory/

[27] http://www.infocore.eu/consortium/associated-stakeholder-network/

[28] http://www.infocore.eu/consortium/advisory-board/

[29] Owing to technical restrictions with the PDF format, we were unable to convert all texts into machine-readable data.

Table 1: Evidence-related content analysis: Overview of the applied sample of NGOs' strategic communication material and media relations texts

Conflict cases	NGO type	Number of texts	Investigation periods
Great Lakes Region, Africa			
Burundi	Local NGOs	669	2010 – 2014
Burundi	TnNGOs	257	
Democratic Republic of Congo	Local NGOs	501	2012 – 2014
Democratic Republic of Congo	TnNGOs	1,529	
Western Balkans			
Kosovo	Local NGOs	235	2010 – 2014
Kosovo	TnNGOs	293	
Macedonia	Local NGOs	188	2011 – 2014
Macedonia	TnNGOs	33	
Middle East			
Israel/Palestine	Local NGOs	4,260	2006 – 2014
Israel/Palestine	TnNGOs	3,092	
Syria	Local NGOs	3,798	2011 – 2014
Syria	TnNGOs	1,407	
Total	**Local NGOs**	**9,651**	
Total	**TnNGOs**	**6,611**	
N		**16,262**	

Table 2: Evidence-related content analysis: Overview of the applied sample of political actors' strategic communication material and media relations texts

Conflict Cases	Type of NGO type	Number of texts	Periods of Investigation
Great Lakes Region, Africa			
Burundi	Local	802	2010 – 2014
Burundi	International	71	
Democratic Republic of Congo	Local	2,531	2012 – 2014
Democratic Republic of Congo	International	1,086	
Western Balkans			
Kosovo	Local	2,696	2010 – 2014
Kosovo	International	1,573	
Macedonia	Local	738	2011 – 2014
Macedonia	International	299	
Middle East			
Israel/Palestine	Local	1,839	2006 – 2014
Israel/Palestine	International	3,868	
Syria	Local	306	2011 – 2014
Syria	International	3,079	
Total	**Local**	**8,912**	
Total	**International**	**9,976**	
N		**18,888**	

Table 3: Gender-related content analysis: Overview of the applied sample of persuasive texts of the strategic communicators per conflict

Conflict Cases	Type of NGO	Number of Texts	Periods of Investigation
Great Lakes Region Africa:			
Burundi	Local NGOs	669	2010 – 2014
Burundi	TnNGOs	257	
Democratic Republic of Congo	Local NGOs	501	2012 – 2014
Democratic Republic of Congo	TnNGOs	1,529	
Western Balkans:			
Kosovo	Local NGOs	235	2010 – 2014
Kosovo	TnNGOs	293	
Macedonia	Local NGOs	188	2011 – 2014
Macedonia	TnNGOs	33	
Middle East:			
Israel/Palestine	Local NGOs	4,260	2006 – 2014
Israel/Palestine	TnNGOs	3,092	
Syria	Local NGOs	3,798	2011 – 2014
Syria	TnNGOs	1,407	
Total	**Local NGOs**	**9,651**	
Total	**TnNGOs**	**6,611**	
N		**16,262**	

For the — comparatively simple — gender-related content analysis (Table 3), we analysed strategic texts stemming from male and female experts or in which they are explicitly represented/cited and/or discussed. These experts for instance represent well-known, important male and female professionals in their functions as members of organisations or institutions (NGOs, governments, political parties, etc.) but also prominent experts, important researchers, spokespersons or activists. They are known by name and were identified and nominated by the respective INFOCORE conflict leaders a priori for each of our six conflicts. In the research material, we identified them (and the text passages that refer to them) by using their individual names as search terms. We compared the results to the given situation in the six conflicts — the shares of male and female experts potentially available as sources.

For the more complex evidence-related content analysis of the over 35,000 text of NGOs (Table 1) and political actors (Table 2), we relied on a dictionary that operationalises around 3,800 different semantic concepts, each expressing semantic ideas such as actors, places, adjectives or actions. It connects each concept with expressions that indicate its application in a text in the different languages included in our research. This procedure enabled high comparability across different cases and languages. To examine how transparently the epistemic statuses of the provided evidential claims were communicated, we collected all semantic concepts that express the '(un)certainty' of a given piece of information. We created these two groups of epistemic statuses because the question of the justification of why something is certain (e.g. mentioning a reliable source) or uncertain (e.g. conceding that concrete proof does not (yet) exist) arose. We consider this form of justification to be an indicator of the application of evidence.[30] We then analysed the occurrence of the two groups of (semantic) concepts (certainty and uncertainty) in the different texts to calculate how often evidential claims were described with either kind of epistemic status. To match the two epistemic statuses to the different evidential claims and their respective topical domains, we determined with which of the other 3,800 different semantic concepts these epistemic statuses co-occur.[31]

We identified the origins and sources of evidential claims with the help of a Python script that searched for specific expressions that signal that a claim is attributed to a source/origin. These expressions were then collected with the aid of an annotated corpus of sampled material. The reliability of this script was tested for false positives as well as false negatives for all three languages. All sentences that contained these expressions were extracted, along with an indicator that links the extracted sentences to the texts from which they stem. We subsequently applied the dictionary to identify who was mentioned as the 'author' of the

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[30] Expressions used to identify these concepts can be provided upon request.

[31] We regarded two concepts as '*co-occurring*' if they appeared within 30 words from each other (the distance was reduced by syntactical breaks such as commas, periods, line breaks). The degree to which two concepts co-occur was then calculated by their proximity within this window.

evidential claim (person, institution), and what the 'origins' of claims (annual report, speech, research pa-per, etc.) were. To analyse the resonance of strategic and media-related communication, we constructed a media sample based on the data from INFOCORE's WP7: 9 international and 12 local media organisations (see footnotes 9 and 10). Table 4 provides an overview of the number of media texts/news/reports we ana-lysed for each conflict.

Table 4: Overview of the applied media sample

Conflict Cases	Type of NGO	Number of Texts	Periods of Investigation
Great Lakes Region Africa:			
Burundi	Local media	2,296	2010 – 2014
Burundi	International media	3,163	
Democratic Republic of Congo	Local media	38,931	2012 – 2014
Democratic Republic of Congo	International media	8,780	
Western Balkans:			
Kosovo	Local media	8,148	2010 – 2014
Kosovo	International media	6,215	
Macedonia	Local media	12,854	2011 – 2014
Macedonia	International media	2,662	
Middle East:			
Israel/Palestine	Local media	139,819	2006 – 2014
Israel/Palestine	International media	47,374	
Syria	Local media	5,336	2011 – 2014
Syria	International media	74,285	
Total	Local media	207,384	
Total	International media	142,479	
N		**349,863**	

PROJECT IDENTITY

PROJECT NAME	(In)forming Conflict Prevention Response And Resolution (INFOCORE)
COORDINATOR	Prof. Dr. Romy Fröhlich, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich, Germany
CONSORTIUM	Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität – LMU – Munich, Germany King's College London – KCL – London, United Kingdom Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya (IDC) – Herzliya, Israel The Hebrew University of Jerusalem – Jerusalem, Israel Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy – ELIAMEP – Athens, Greece Global Governance Institute ASBL – GGI – Brussels, Belgium School of Journalism and Public Relation – SJPR – Skopje, Macedonia Universidad Rey Juan Carlos – URJC – Madrid, Spain Université Libre de Bruxelles – ULB – Brussels, Belgium
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FURTHER READING	1. Fröhlich, R. (2016). Gender, media and security. In P. Robinson, P. Seib, & R. Fröhlich (eds.), *Routlege handbook of media, conflict and security*. Oxford: Routlege. 2. Fröhlich, R. (2014). *Strategic communication's contributions and roles in the media's dynamic construction and contestation of conflict discourse*. INFOCORE Working Paper 2014/06. Online available at http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Conceptual-Paper-WP6_final.pdf 3. Fröhlich, R. & Jungblut, M. (2017, forthcoming). Between factoids and facts: the application of "evidence" in NGO strategic communication on war and armed conflict. *Media, War and Conflict*. 4. Meyer, C. & Sangar, E. (2014). *NGOs, media and conflict*. INFOCORE Working Paper 2014/04. Online available at http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/INFOCOREconceptual-framework-WP4_NGOs-and-media.pdf 5. Wolfsfeld, G. (2014). *Political leaders, media, and conflict*. INFOCORE Working Paper 2014/02. Online availabe at http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/MethodologicalFramework-WP2_final.pdf