

# LA BENEVOLENCIA

Using media and  
outreach activities to...

empower people ...

resist hate speech,  
scapegoating and  
identity  
manipulation...

stimulate audiences  
through radio dramas  
media debates, video  
games ...

Attack Problems  
Not People.



Prologue

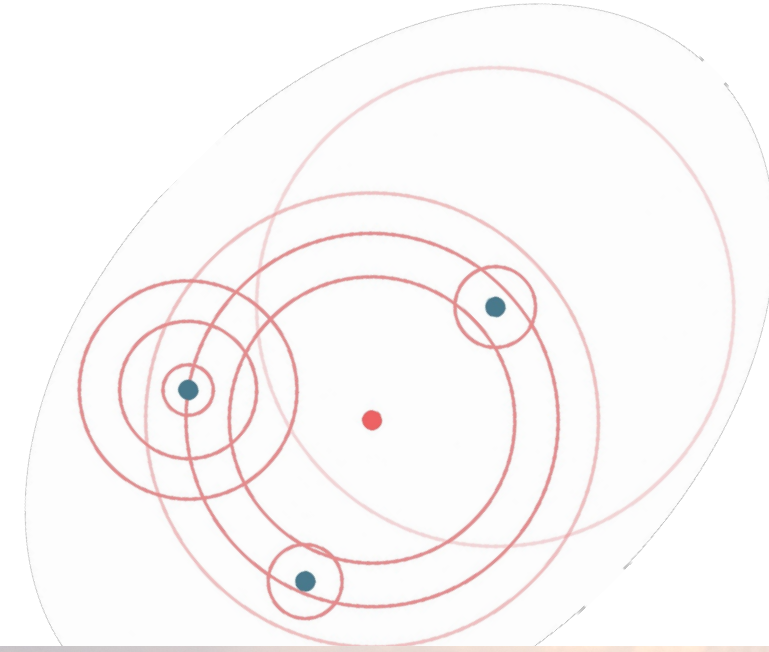
**MUSEKEWEYA**

# Introduction

- Established in 2002, RLB is a Dutch NGO committed to the empowerment of minorities and social groups affected by ethnocentric or other forms of hate violence
- Over 18 years of experience in delivering national/regional media-based behaviour change programmes using edutainment and psychological approaches
- 3 Field offices in Rwanda, Burundi and Eastern DRC
- 2 pan-European projects in NL, Hungary, Belgium, Italy, Austria and Greece against extremist radicalisation, using online videogaming & online campaigning

# The Goal

**A future world that has overcome polarization and violence, whose people work together to deal with its problems and existential crises.**



Making a durable contribution to inclusiveness, resilience, trust-building, social cohesion and conflict transformation in vulnerable societies.



# The messaging: the Continuum of Violence

by Ervin Staub (1992)

La Benevolencija's approach is based on research conducted by Prof. Ervin Staub (genocide psychologist) and Dr. Laurie Pearlman (trauma specialist) on the origins and prevention of genocide and the impact of unresolved trauma.

Prof. Staub's research identifies a simple to learn, universal "Continuum of Violence" comprising a step-by-step process of polarization and radicalization that can ultimately lead to violence, war and genocide.

Active bystanders can counteract this process and stop further violence by speaking out in time against injustices and manipulation.

Their Goal: "Attacking Problems, Not people!"

RLB media and outreach campaigns recognise that discrimination, marginalization, exclusion and other forms of rights deprivations play a central role in perpetuating the cycle of violence. To counteract this, a knowledge-attitude-practice (KAP) approach is used to sensitise audiences.

Knowledge: of catalytic factors that lead to violence

Attitude: of resistance to divisive ideologies

Practice: of interrupting processes that lead to violence



English: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoyY4nQHgiY>

Kinyarwanda: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfUmz7TrOVA>



# The messages

- Starting points for hostility and violence: the frustration of basic psychological needs (all humans have them):
  - ↓ Difficult life conditions;
  - ↓ Lead to fear & negative identity;
  - ↓ people turning to a group for identity and support and;
  - ↓ begin scapegoating others;
  - ↓ If the scapegoating continues, this will lead to violence.
  - ↓ In extreme cases - this can even result in genocide.
- The Counterweight: The importance and do-ability of Active Bystandership



# Methodology: Education and Entertainment (E&E)

Radio La Benevolencija produces fictional and factual/informational media programs to raise awareness of, and to counteract, the Continuum of Violence. The aim is to promote resilience to incitement and stimulate societal reconciliation.

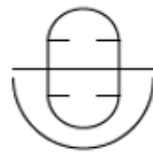
RLB behaviour change media and outreach campaigns, at the national and/or regional level, are designed to be mutually reinforcing and complementary. They target:

- General populations with edutainment outputs such as radio dramas/ sketches
- A leadership audience with a series of factual/journalistic radio (and/or TV) programs
- Grassroots communities by creating practical experience through local change agents and community engagement.



## Fictional media

Radio soaps, audio/video sketches.



## Factual media

Hate speech monitoring chronicles, radio debates, documentaries, TV programs.

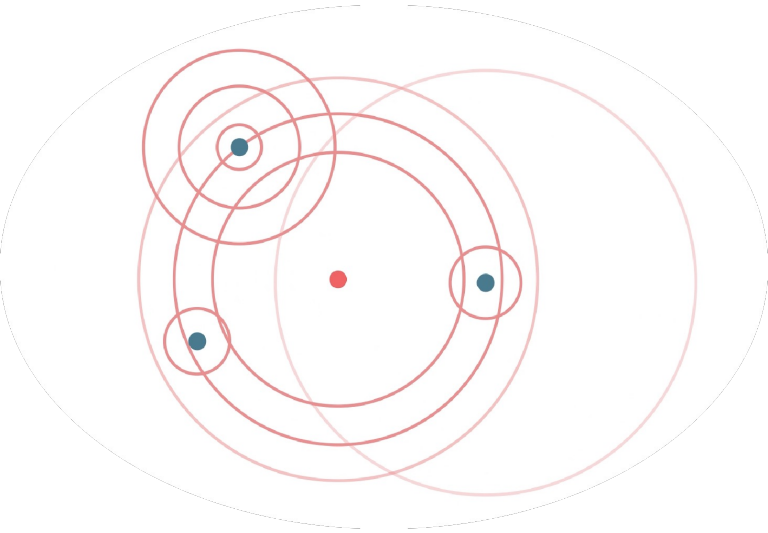


## Grassroots activities

Radio listening clubs, dialogue/debate sessions, college tours, participative theatre, cultural events.

# Projects East Africa

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La Benevolencija has been running behaviour change campaigns in Rwanda (since 2003), Burundi (since 2007) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (since 2006)

The very popular drama series, a major component of these campaigns, contribute to trauma processing, reconciliation, reintegration of ex-combatants and prisoners and inclusive dialogue.

Grassroots activities and training programs support the effect of the weekly broadcasts.

In addition, hate propaganda in politics and media is monitored and efforts are being made to de-escalate tensions in the border areas.



# M4D Regional Campaigns

- ❖ Fictional Campaigns:
  - Kumbuka Kesho radio drama
  - Bustani Ya Amani radio sketch
  - Combo taxi audio and video sketch
  
- ❖ Factual Campaign
  - Maoni Yako news magazine
  - Tukae Pamoja radio debates
  - 'NON au Discours Haineaux' campaign (by journalists /bloggers)
  
- ❖ Grassroots campaigns
  - Dialogue and debate session
  - College Tours
  - Restitution sessions
  - Cultural activities: artistic residencies, concerts, sports tournaments
  
- ❖ Partners' Communication campaigns
  - Usalama Wetu radio debates (ESPER Consortium (VNG/CORDAID))
  - Mawu Tatu radio debates (CARE, LPI)



# Who's involved in it ?

## Target Groups

- General host (at national level) and guest (in cross-border zones) populations of Rwanda, Burundi and Eastern DR Congo
- Women, men and youth, aged 18-45, vulnerable to manipulation in specific communities in and around the Rusizi Plains and the Volcano region



# Where do we work ?

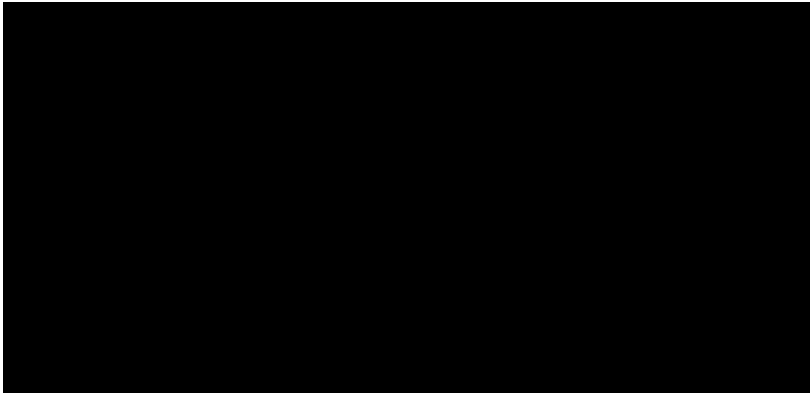
At **National** level via a network of traditional and digital media houses:

In cross-border communities in and around the **Rusizi plains** and the **Volcano region**:

- DR Congo: Territories of Goma, Rutchuru, Niyargongo, Massisi, Bukavu, Kalehe, Uvira, Fizi
- Burundi: Provinces of Cibitoke, Bubanza, Rumonge and Bujumbura Rurale
- Rwanda: Districts of Rusizi, Rubavu, Gicumbi and Karongi

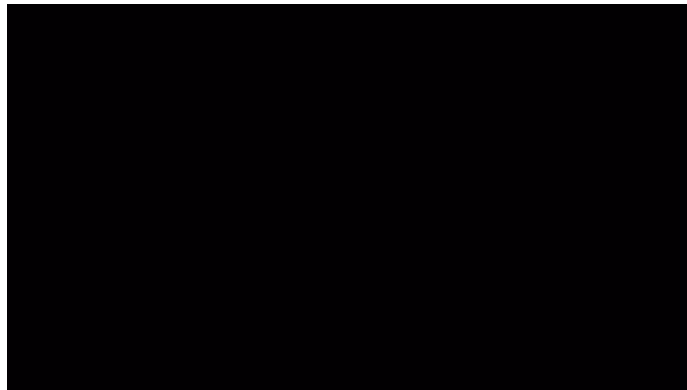


# Themes and activities in practice (Media 4 Dialogue):



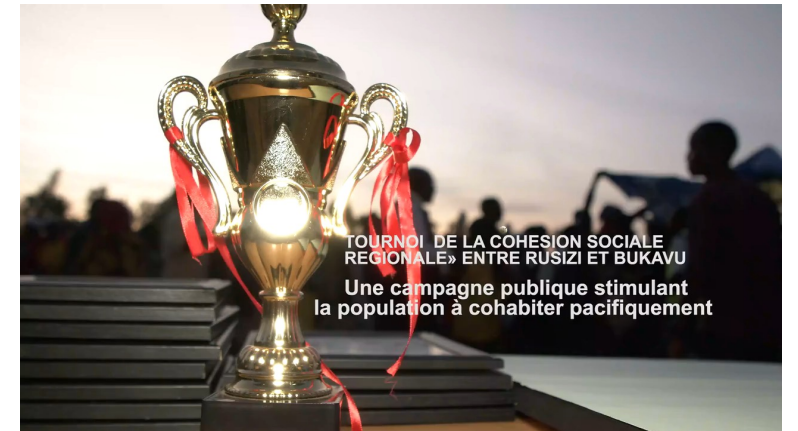
**Cultural projects with artists  
(festival):**

**Artists against hate speech**



**College Tour (Debate):**

**Place and role of culture and  
artists in the pacification of the  
region**

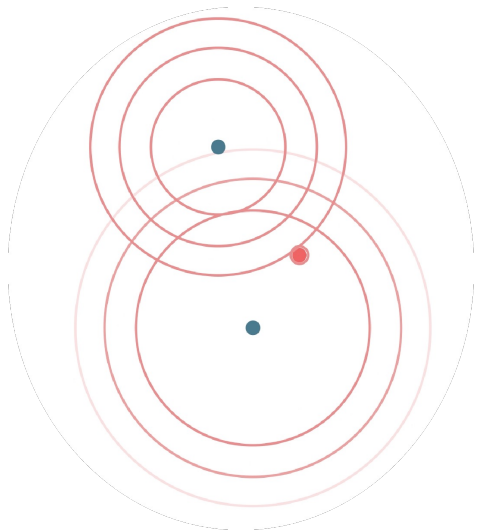


**Alternative activities:**

**And what if we just played  
football?**

# Projects Europe – TAJSA.eu

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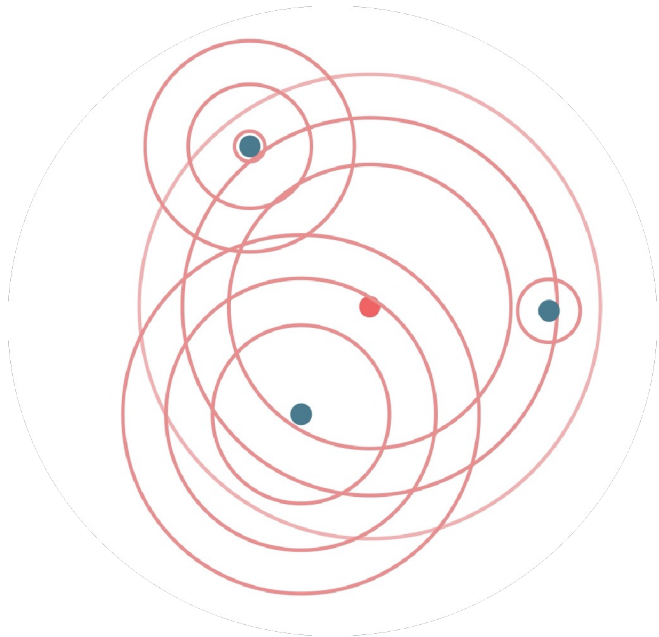
Informative online platform with 24 video and audio podcasts about the genocide of the Roma and Sinti during the Second World War and its impact on the identity and current conditions of the Roma communities in twelve European countries.

The platform not only provides insight into how the continuum of violence works out and how the genocide continues to affect the present, but also aims to make Roma more resilient by offering them the skills to speak up about their experiences.



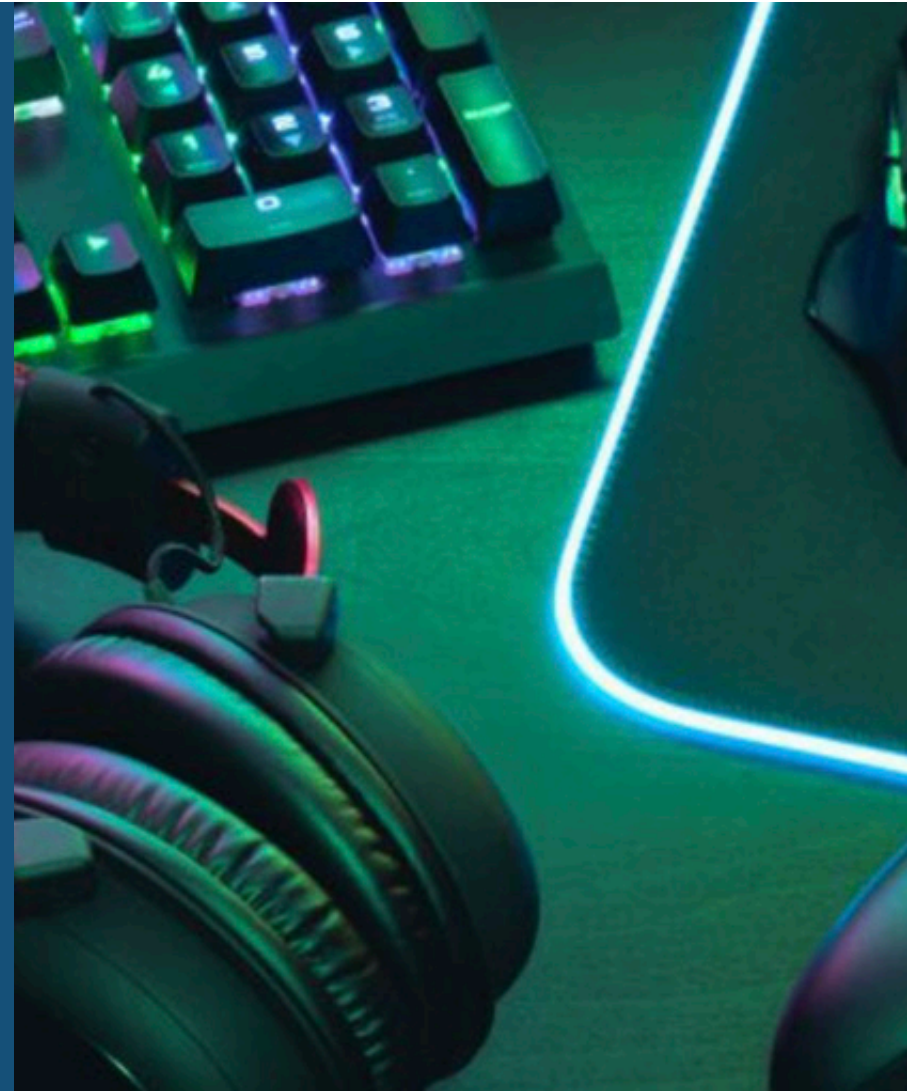
# Europe – Gamer

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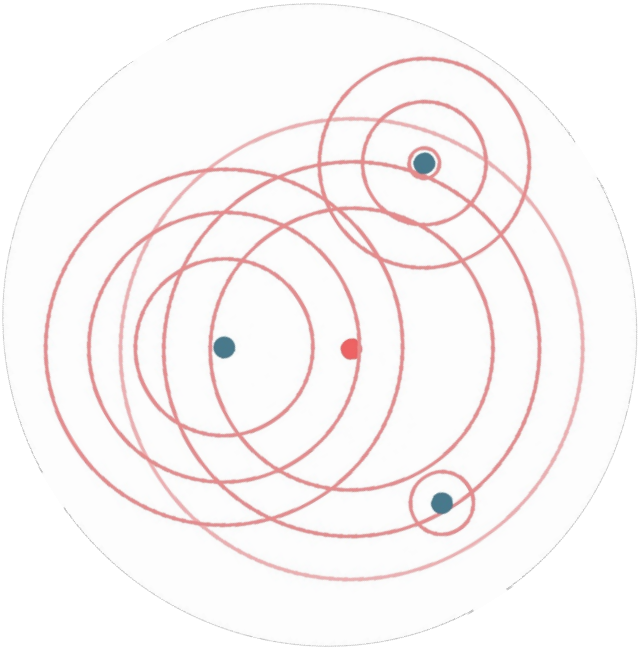


In response to the increasing toxic populism and right-wing extremism in Europe, La Benevolencija started a project in 2019 in collaboration with partners in Italy and Hungary that focuses on the potential radicalization of young people.

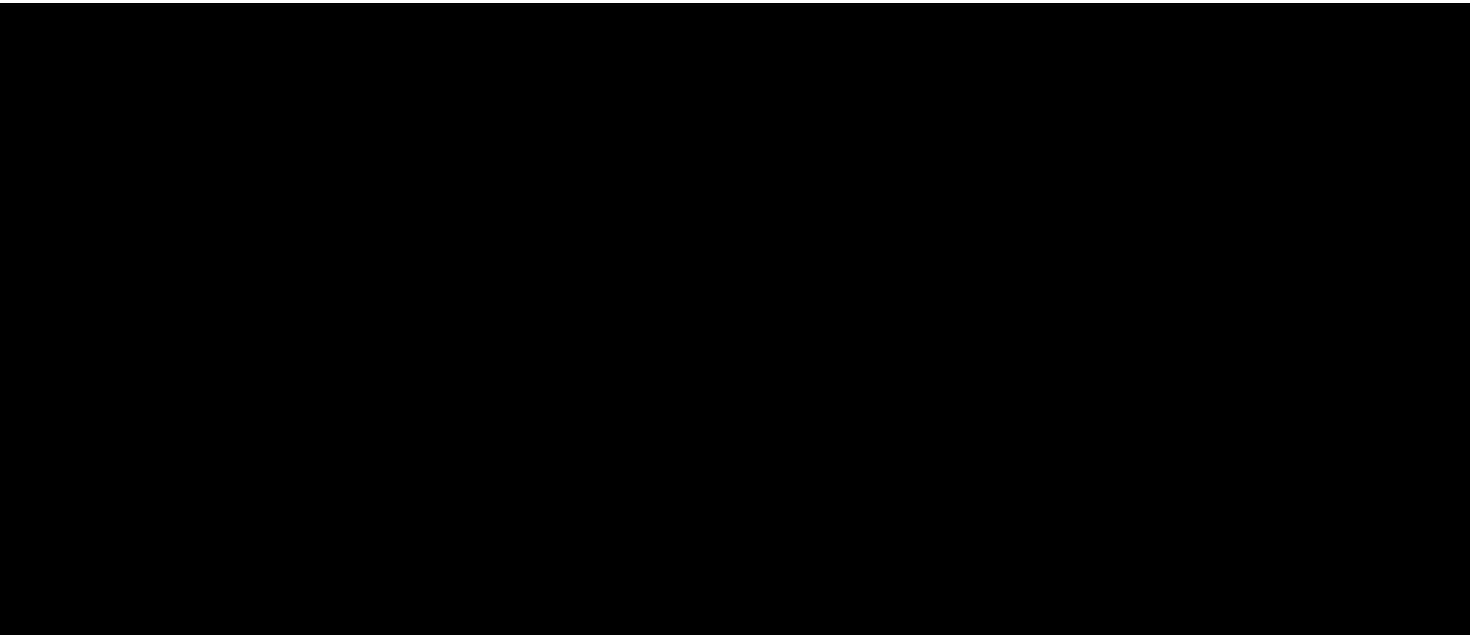
Based on the expertise gained in Africa, an online game was developed that encourages critical thinking in order to prevent extremism among vulnerable young people in the three countries.



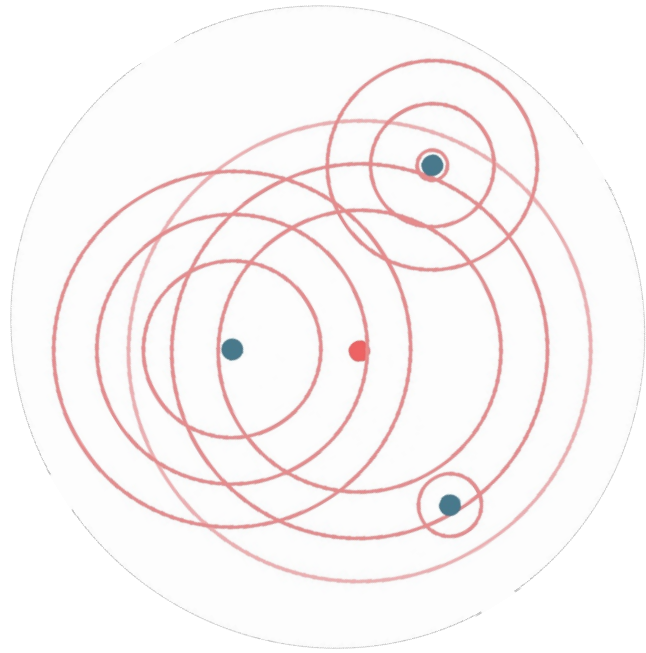
# New Media & Target Audiences



**Horns of Justice**



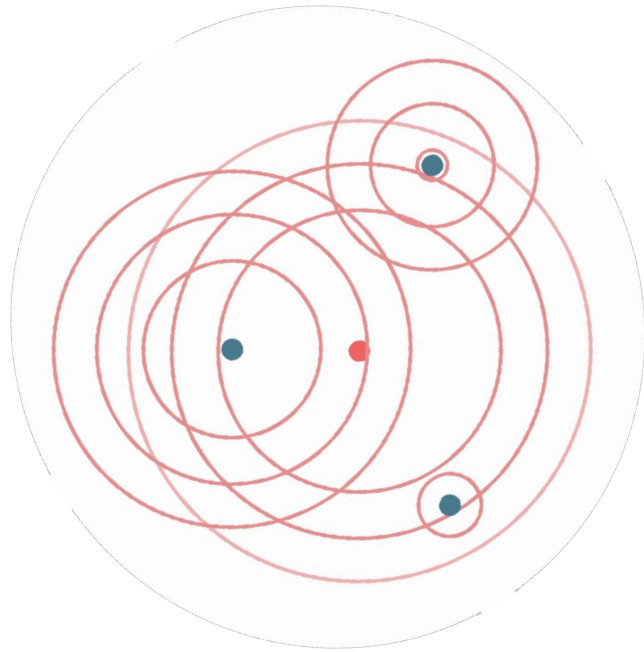
# New Media & Target Audiences



**Horns of Justice**  
**Cut Scene**



# New Media & Target Audiences

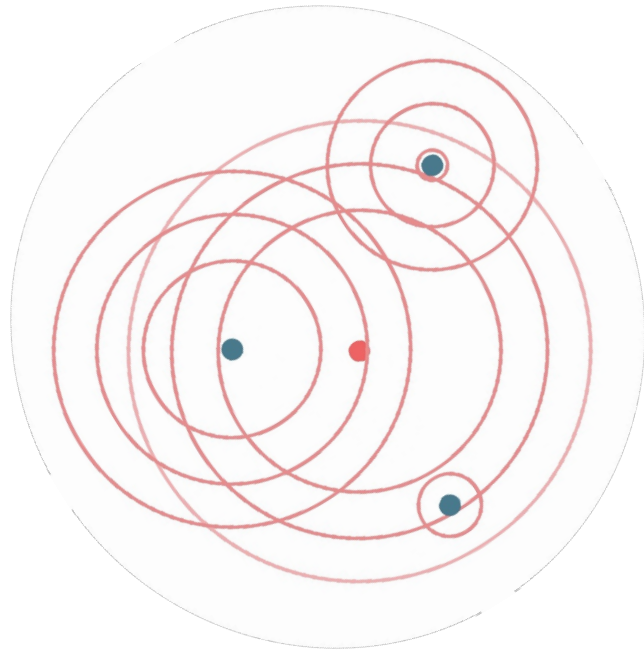


Horns of Justice  
Choice





# New Media & Target Audiences



**The Love Language  
of Populist Leaders**

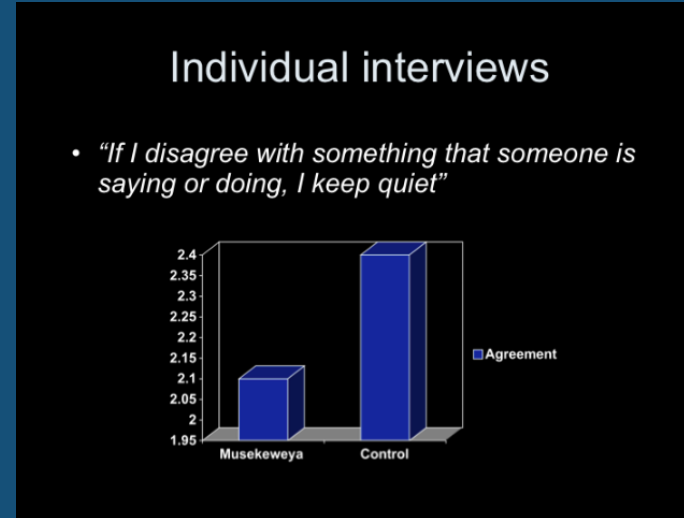
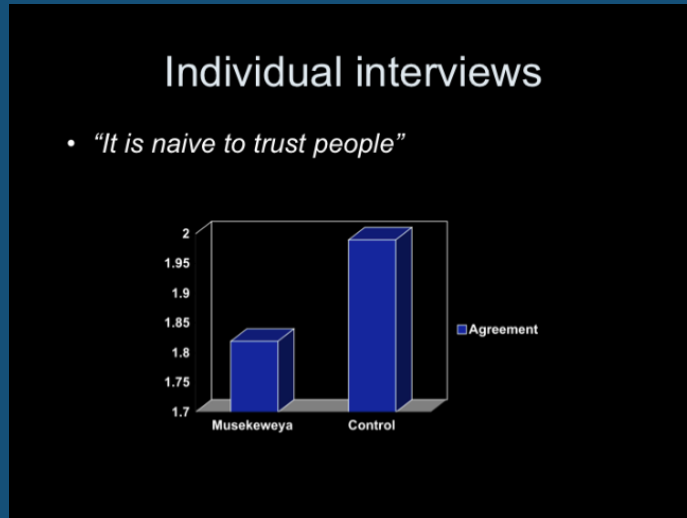




Impact

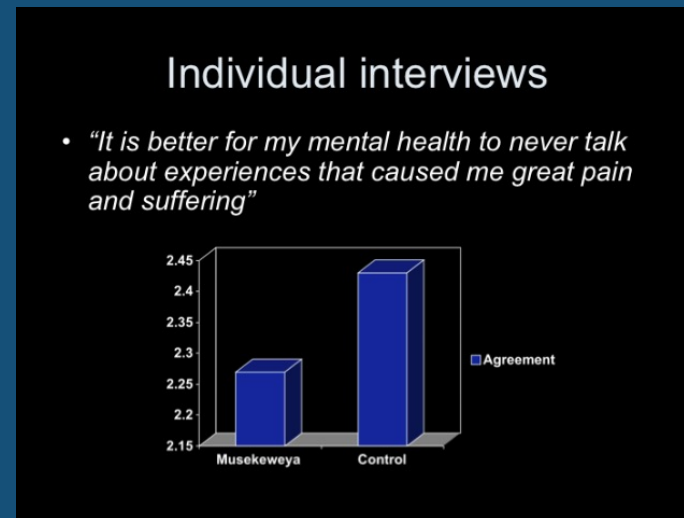
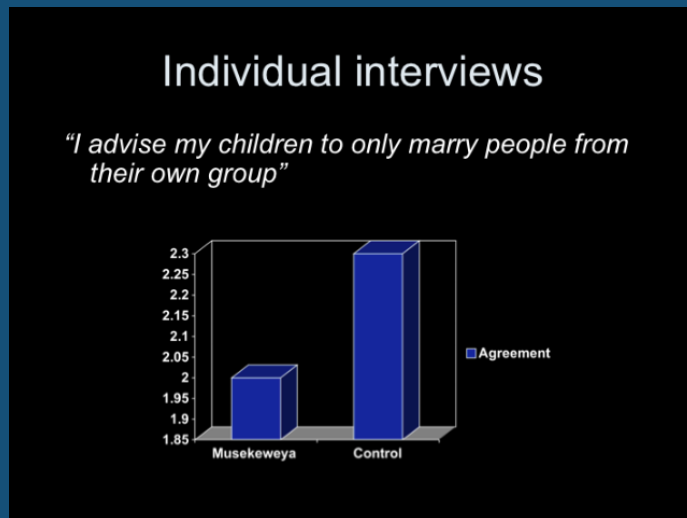
# Impact: E&E Outputs (Drama)

**Trust;** greater willingness to trust others



**Bystanders;** more motivated to active bystandership

Greater willingness to consider **intermarriage**

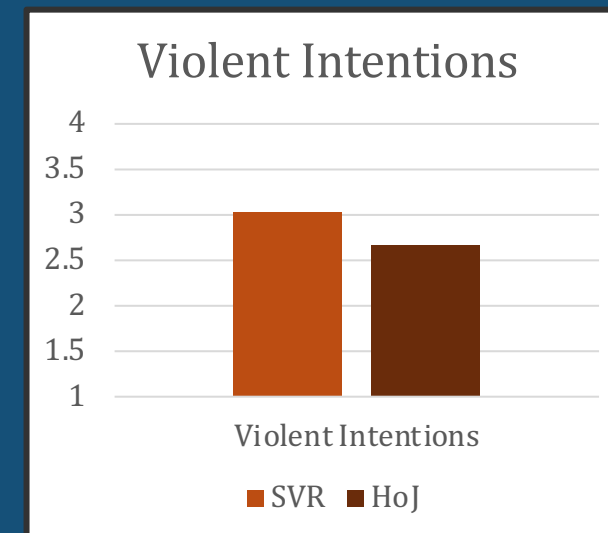
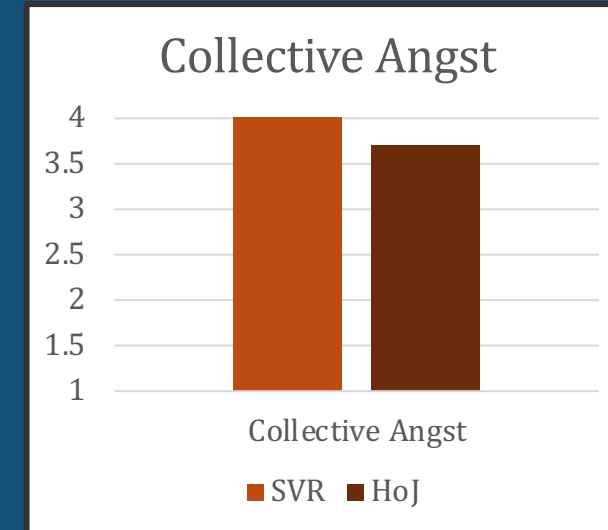


Greater willingness to talk about **trauma**

*Overall, listeners challenge groupthink, reject scapegoating, realize the benefits of active bystandership, understand trauma and the impact of historical legacies.*

# Impact GAMER: Main analyses 1

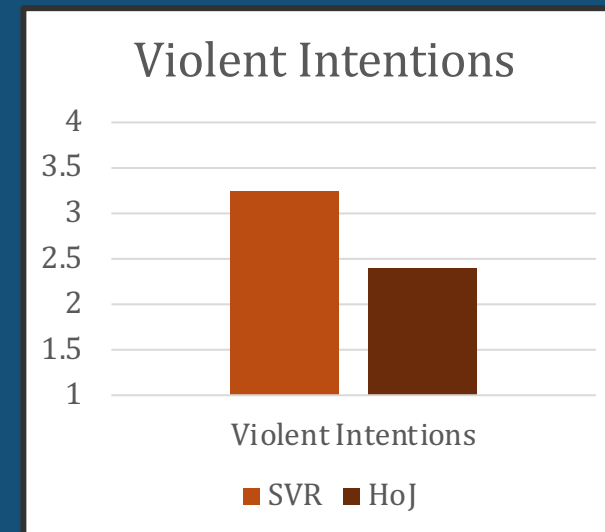
- Horns of Justice less collective angst than control game (SVR)
  - “I feel anxious about the future of my society”
- Trend: Horns of Justice less violent intentions than control game (SVR)
  - “I am prepared to use violence against other people to achieve something I consider very important”



# Impact GAMER: Right-wing data 1

For right-leaning participants ( $N = 28$ ):

- Trend: Horns of Justice less conspiracy beliefs than control game (SVR)
  - “I think that the official version of the events given by the authorities very often hides the truth”
- Trend: Horns of Justice less violent intentions than control game (SVR)
  - “I am prepared to use violence against other people to achieve something I consider very important”



# More information

[www.labenevolencija.org](http://www.labenevolencija.org)

## Contact:

Sumatrakade 1485  
1019 RS Amsterdam  
[georgew@labenevolencija.org](mailto:georgew@labenevolencija.org)  
+31 (0)20 616 65 99