



ANDE Strategic Communications PLAYBOOK

Designing, planning and executing communications that move resources

A working guide for the ANDE Communications Team
and Member Communications Specialists

Grounded in the ANDE 2026 Communications Strategy, Message House and Editorial Guidelines.

Version 1.2 — by [Roger Santodomingo](#), Head of Communications. Internal use only

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Introduction | Why this playbook

ANDE communications are not ad hoc copywriting. They are the visible expression of an organizational strategy whose through-line is resource flow: capital, knowledge, partnerships and standards moving faster and more reliably to the small and growing businesses that create jobs and strengthen local economies. Every blog post, newsletter, social post, campaign, op-ed and convening pitch should be doing one of three things: helping members deliver better outcomes, aligning ecosystem actors, or connecting credible intermediaries with real demand.

This playbook summarizes decades of experience in the field and adapts a body of strategic work developed in three years of work creating, producing and executing ANDE campaigns and communications, discussed during strategy meetings and expressed in some of our playbook documents: the 2026 Communications Strategy, the Message House, and the Editorial Guidelines. It is a working manual, not a position paper. Use it when you start a campaign, draft a launch plan, brief a regional chapter, prepare a thought leadership push, or ready your team for a crisis.



"Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat."

Sun Tzu, The Art of War

How to use this guide

The playbook is organized so each part stands on its own. Read end-to-end the first time so the logic is clear. Afterward, jump to the part you need. Eight parts, in order:

1. Foundations: the ANDE voice, Message House and audience promises that everything else inherits.
2. Designing strategic communications: a five-step planning framework.
3. From knowledge to action: the activation point approach for moving audiences.
4. Building thought leadership: turning ANDE's knowledge and activities into authority.
5. Planning a campaign that wins: a nine-step campaign framework.
6. Visual communication and brand consistency.

7. Social media execution.
8. Crisis prep and management.

A final section collects the worksheets and checklists in one place so they can be printed, shared with chapter teams or used in workshops.

Who this is for

- ANDE Global Communications staff leading on strategy, editorial, newsletters, brand, conferences and digital.
 - Regional chapter Communications Coordinators translating global strategy into local programs and audiences.
 - Member Communications Specialists: staff at member organizations who collaborate with ANDE on joint campaigns, partner content, conference promotion and toolkits.
 - Programs leads, research staff and conveners: anyone who briefs Comms or fields a request for content support.
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Part 1. Foundations | How ANDE communicates

Before any planning, three artifacts orient every piece of ANDE communication: the Message House, the brand persona, and the editorial voice. Internalize these. They are not decoration, instead, use it as the test every draft has to pass.

1.1 The Message House at a glance

The Message House frames the ANDE narrative everyone on the team should know and use. The visual makes the messages easier to remember and easier to repurpose for a different audience or context.

ROOF – The network where the SGB sector gets business done ANDE accelerates the flow of resources—capital, knowledge, partnerships, and standards—so small and growing businesses can grow, create jobs and strengthen local economies.		
Pillar 1: Member effectiveness + value	Pillar 2: Ecosystems that move resources	Pillar 3: Cross-sector pathways
We help ESOs deliver better outcomes, and prove it, so more resources reach growth-ready entrepreneurs.	We convene, map and align ecosystem actors so capital, policy and support systems work for SGB growth.	We connect credible intermediaries and pipelines with real demand, so intent becomes execution at sector scale.
Evidence that unlocks funding and influence; peer learning that changes practice; visibility that converts into opportunity.	Coordination with consequences; applied insights that inform decisions, not reports; growth as the pathway to impact (jobs, gender, climate resilience).	Capital pathways; procurement and market access mechanisms; policy alignment using ecosystem intelligence.

FOUNDATION | Proof, signals and always-on credibility

- Measurement and learning systems (SCALE, GALI, peer learning, metrics labs).
- Ecosystem diagnostics (mapping, bottleneck analysis) and practical learning products.
- Cross-sector mechanisms (standards, guidance, partnerships that route demand through members).
- Regional proof of execution (programs, convenings, partnerships as examples – not the headline).

The Message House is the priority hierarchy. When you sit down to write, ask first: Which pillar is this story serving? What evidence drawer am I drawing from? If a piece of content cannot answer those two questions, it is supporting evidence at most – not headline material.

1.2 Brand persona | Innovator and Sage

ANDE's brand persona blends two archetypes.

- **The Innovator** (Creator) shows up as creative, imaginative, boundary-pushing, always looking for new ways to solve problems and create value.
- **The Sage** shows up as knowledgeable, wise, insightful and trustworthy, a guide that has its allies' backs.

What does it mean in practice: When building a narrative, ANDE should appear as the innovator, be original and forward-looking, and be evidence-led. When in doubt, lean Sage. ANDE earns attention because it knows things others don't and shares them honestly.

1.3 ANDE voice | what it sounds like

All ANDE editorial follows an American/Aspen version of the Financial Times style guide for business journalism: clear, informative, precise and respectful of the reader's time. It is journalistic, not corporate; persuasive but restrained; specific, not abstract.

SAY MORE OF	SAY LESS OF
Accelerating the flow of resources (capital, knowledge, partnerships, standards).	Abstract "empowering ecosystems" language without specifying how business gets done.
Execution, adoption, mechanisms, pathways, what works in practice.	Hype words: exciting, transformative, pivotal, game-changing, unless the facts justify them.
Growth is the pathway to impact (jobs, gender equity, climate resilience).	"Exciting news" or any language that signals enthusiasm in the absence of specifics.
Specific numbers, places, partners, timeframes.	Generic praise of "our community" or "our work" with no proof point attached.
Novelty + implications + audience utility.	Restating the mission instead of stating the news.

A common trap to avoid: don't let the story become "ANDE does everything." The 2026 strategic through-line is resource flow. If a program doesn't clearly speed or improve flow, it's supporting evidence, not the headline.

1.4 The five audience promises

ANDE serves a network. The Message House gives each audience a different promise and a different proof type. Memorize the audience-promise pairs; they tell you which evidence drawer to pull from.

AUDIENCE	PROMISE	PROOF TYPES TO PULL FROM
ESOs (members and prospective members)	Improve your practice, prove your impact and access partnerships that help your entrepreneurs grow.	Tools and training, peer learning, visibility, standards, convenings.
Funders, DFIs and governments	Place resources where they will perform – through evidence, ecosystem intelligence and execution-ready networks.	Mapping and diagnostics, learning reports, portfolio insights, standards and shared measures.
Corporates and investors	Turn market intent into SGB outcomes – by connecting credible intermediaries, pipelines and practical mechanisms.	Procurement coalitions (e.g., ECOA), ESG metrics guidance, partnerships routed through members.
Universities and researchers	ANDE is the applied research partner with real-world networks – turning insights into adoption.	Briefs, snapshots, in-house reports, collaborative research, evidence building, data sharing, field labs.
Internal (staff and board members)	A coherent narrative everyone can recite, repurpose and adapt.	Message House, editorial guidelines, newsletter playbook.

ANDE is the network where the SGB sector gets business done. We align ESOs, funders and policymakers, corporates and investors, and researchers so resources move faster to growth-ready small businesses.

Part 2. Designing strategic communications

Strategic communication is the deliberate use of the organization's voice to motivate a defined audience to take a defined action. Five steps, each building on the previous one. Take them in order. If a later decision forces you to revisit an earlier one, do: strategy is iterative, not linear in a stiff sense.

The five steps at a glance

- Step 1 – Decide what we want to do (objective + decision-maker).
- Step 2 – Read the room (internal scan, external scan, framing).
- Step 3 – Choose audiences and messages (priority audiences, readiness, values, barriers, message box, messengers).
- Step 4 – Pick high-impact tactics (channels, timing, assignments, budget).
- Step 5 – Set measurements that matter (outputs paired with outcomes).

2.1 Step 1 | Decide what we want to do

Set a SMART objective

A goal is the long-term victory. An objective is the equivalent of a tactical goal, the concrete step you can complete in a 12–18 month horizon. A tactical objective is what you can achieve under that long term horizon, from one to six months. Beware the vague objective. "Raise awareness" is rarely an objective on its own. Push the question: awareness for what action, by whom, by when?

Make objectives Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound.

ANDE objectives generally fall into one of four buckets:

- **Behavior change** | getting an audience to start or stop doing something (e.g., more ESOs adopt a metrics framework; more investors join a procurement coalition; completing a survey).
- **Policy change** | government or institutional policy adjustments (e.g., a national agency aligning with shared SGB measurement standards).
- **Practice change** | adoption of a tool, framework or guidance (e.g., GALI uptake among accelerator programs, ecosystem diagnostic toolkit, inclusion toolkit).

- **Fundraising or partnership** | secured funding, registrations to events, signed partners or member growth tied to a specific window.

Three examples of SMART objectives, ANDE-styled

- By the end of Q4, ten members publicly commit to using a shared SGB outcomes metric in their next reporting cycle.
- Within 12 months of launch, the Ecosystem Diagnostic Toolkit is referenced in five government or DFI strategy documents.
- By the close of the 2026 Annual Conference campaign, three corporate partners join the procurement coalition with named pipeline commitments.

Identify the decision-maker

The decision-maker is the person (never an institution) who can say yes or no to your objective. "The ministry of finance" is not a decision-maker. The minister, or the director of an SGB unit who shapes the minister's brief, is.

A Smart Chart has one decision-maker. If you have two, you have two plans. Sometimes ANDE has direct access to the decision-maker (a member CEO, a chapter convener); sometimes you have to influence them through people they trust.

2.2 Step 2 | Read the room

Internal scan: what do we have to work with?

Look honestly at ANDE's assets and constraints for this specific objective. Categories to consider:

- **Reputation and reach:** is ANDE well-known to this audience? Trusted? Are we credentialed in this geography or sub-sector?
- **Network capacity:** do we have the right members, partners, regional staff and convenings already lined up to support this?
- **Evidence:** what reports, datasets, learning labs, diagnostic outputs and member case studies can we credibly cite?
- **Resources and time:** staff capacity, budget, and how this campaign sits against other priorities for the next 6–12–18 months.
- **Storytelling material:** do we have compelling stories ready, or are we in a drought?

External scan: what's happening around us?

- Is the issue hot or cold? Favorable, neutral or hostile coverage in business and development press? In SGB-specific outlets?
- What other organizations are working in this space? Are they aligned, competing for attention, or potential coalition partners?
- Is there opposition or skepticism: funder fatigue, narrative pushback, policy headwinds?
- Are there timing hooks: anniversaries, multilateral summits, government strategy cycles, regional conferences, climate weeks, awareness months?
- Are there misconceptions, misinformation or competing narratives that could trip the campaign?

Position the conversation: framing

Frames are mental shortcuts that shape how an audience makes sense of an issue.

Strategic framing means deliberately choosing the entry point — not letting the dominant narrative do it by default.

For each campaign, decide whether you are framing a new conversation, fortifying an existing favorable frame, or reframing a losing or harmful one:

1. **Frame a new conversation.** The idea is so new most audiences don't recognize it (e.g., a novel financing mechanism). Use a metaphor or anchor concept to land it.
2. **Fortify and amplify a helpful frame.** The conversation is already moving in your favor. Don't waste energy introducing a new frame; turn up the volume on the one that works.
3. **Reframe a losing or damaging conversation.** The dominant frame is harming the work: for example, an SGB narrative that frames small business support as charity rather than as an engine of jobs and growth. Reframing requires resources and discipline to stick to a new vocabulary across messages, channels and spokespeople.



Reframing is not the same as saying it differently. Reframing creates a new entry point for the decision-maker and the audiences influencing them, not for you and your existing supporters.

Asset framing matters here. Define communities, regions and entrepreneurs by their aspirations and contributions before naming the challenges they face. "Growth-ready businesses solving local problems" lands differently than "vulnerable enterprises in fragile markets."

2.3 Step 3 | Make strategic choices about audiences and messages

Choose priority audiences

"The general public" is never an audience for ANDE. Segment until each audience is specific, identifiable and persuadable. Three filters apply:

1. **Closeness to the decision-maker.** Does this audience have access or influence?
2. **Reachability.** Can ANDE actually engage this audience through its existing channels and partner network?
3. **Movability.** Will this audience act on ANDE's behalf if engaged well?

Segment by relevant axes:

- role (program officer vs. portfolio manager vs. policy advisor),
- geography (regional and national),
- psychographics (priorities, values, beliefs about SGBs and ESOs) and
- stage of relationship with ANDE (member, prospective member, partner, observer).

Psychographics matter more than demographics for persuasion: two people with the same job title can hold completely different priorities.

Then sort by gots, gettables and never-gonnas. The gots are with you already, feed them, don't spend disproportionate energy persuading them. The gettables are on the fence. Concentrate effort there. The never-gonnas will rarely move; resist the temptation to engage them at the expense of audiences you can actually shift.

Diagnose readiness | sharing knowledge, building will or reinforcing action

Different audiences need different things. Place each priority audience in one of three readiness stages, because the right message is different at each stage.

STAGE	WHAT AUDIENCE NEEDS	WHAT ANDE SHOULD BE DOING
Sharing knowledge	Doesn't know enough to engage. Needs to know, care and believe.	Make the issue personally relevant. Use evidence honestly. Don't overwhelm. Avoid jargon. Lead with one clear point.
Building will	Knows and believes, but isn't acting. There's a barrier (time, risk, doubt, competing priority).	Diagnose the specific barrier. Show peers acting. Mitigate perceived risk. Make the action feel manageable, in their comfort zone, and worth it.
Reinforcing action	Has acted at least once. Needs to feel that it mattered and that there's reason to act again.	Praise specifically, not generically. Show concrete results their action contributed to. Connect the win back to their values.

Identify values, core concerns and barriers

People act when issues align with values they already hold. Don't try to install new values; surface and connect to existing ones. Pair this with an honest read of what could prevent action, the "deal-breaker" barrier you must address head-on.

ANDE-relevant value examples:

- rigor (does this evidence stand up?);
- efficiency (will resources actually move?);
- reputation (will this make my organization look credible?);
- impact at scale (does this reach beyond a pilot?);
- peer signal (are credible others doing this?).

For each priority audience, identify one core value and the single most important barrier to address.

Build the message | the message box

Once you know the audience's value and barrier, build a four-part message. The boxes are not linear. You can deliver them in any order. They are:

- **Value message:** Connects to the audience's core concern. Should make them nod.
- **Overcoming the barrier:** Addresses the resistance without repeating it. (Repeating reinforces.) Reframe positively.
- **Ask:** One specific, doable action, not a laundry list. "Learn about this issue" is not an ask. "Sign on to the joint statement by 30 September" is.
- **Vision:** What changes if the audience acts. The vision must mirror the value. If the value is rigor, the vision is a sector that funds what works, not a vague better world.

Test your message | the editor's checklist

- Is the message based on the audience's core concern, not ANDE's?
- Does it overcome, not reinforce, the barrier?
- Is the ask in the audience's comfort zone? If not, do the benefits clearly outweigh the risk?
- Is each message a single sentence that's repeatable, not a paragraph that's diluted?
- Is the language concrete, journalistic and free of hype words like "exciting," "transformative," "pivotal"?
- Is the messaging consistent with the chosen frame and narrative?
- Does it connect to a Message House pillar and an evidence drawer?

Choose the messenger

Research consistently shows messengers matter as much as messages. The right message from a messenger with no credibility is ignored. Match the messenger to the audience:

- Peer-to-peer (member to member, ESO leader to ESO leader, researcher to researcher) – the most efficient mover in many ANDE contexts.
- In-group community member – a respected voice from the audience's own network or geography (local business leader, regional convener, policy advisor).
- Topic expert – recognized for issue depth (a SCALE researcher, a metrics lab lead, a published author).

- ANDE staff or coalition voice – when institutional credibility is what carries the message.

Messengers must walk the walk. Pick someone who not only believes in the values and actions associated with the cause, but lives them

2.4 Step 4 | Pick high-Impact tactics

Tactics deliver the message: a newsletter, a blog post, a LinkedIn campaign, a webinar, a regional convening, an op-ed, a published toolkit, a media briefing, an Annual Conference session. Tactics should flow logically from the audience and message decisions, not be picked first and reverse-engineered.

- **Use the most direct tactic that will work.** To reach existing supporters, a newsletter beats an ad campaign.
- **Match channel to audience habit.** Where does this audience go for information? LinkedIn is high-value for ANDE's professional audiences; X is shrinking but has retained pockets; regional outlets and local-language media often outperform global English-language press for chapter campaigns.
- **Repetition is required.** Audiences need to encounter a message multiple times across channels to retain it. Plan for the amplification cycle (see Part 4).
- **Pick fewer, better tactics.** A handful of well-executed activities consistently beats a long list of half-finished ones.

Timing

- **Guaranteed timing** | calendar moments you can plan around: Annual Conference, COP or Climate Week, WB/IMF Spring Meetings, Skoll Forum, awareness months, government strategy cycles, the close of fiscal years.
- **Invented timing** | moments ANDE creates: a campaign launch, a regional convening, a report release, a virtual learning series, an awareness day.
- **Unexpected timing** | outside events that suddenly make an ANDE issue relevant. Build a small playbook for the most likely surprise scenarios so the team can move within hours, not weeks.

Assignments and budget

Every tactic needs an owner, a deadline and a budget (staff time included). Cross-check against the internal scan: if the team is over-committed, cut tactics rather than execute them poorly.

2.5 Step 5 | Set measurements that matter

Outputs are what you do. Outcomes are what happens because of what you did. Every output must be paired with at least one measurable outcome. A communications plan that only lists outputs has no way to know if it's working.

OUTPUT (WHAT WE DO)	OUTCOME (WHAT WE EXPECT TO HAPPEN)	HOW WE'D KNOW
Publish a learning brief on metrics adoption.	Three members reference the brief in their next funder report.	Mention tracking; member outreach check-ins.
Run a four-week LinkedIn campaign on a virtual learning series.	Registrations exceed the previous series by 25%; new audience segments register.	Registration data; UTM tracking; new vs. returning split.
Place an op-ed in a regional business outlet.	Two follow-up partnership conversations are initiated by readers.	Inbound inquiries logged; partnership pipeline review.
Send a partner toolkit ahead of the Annual Conference.	60% of invited partners post at least one approved promo asset.	Social listening; UTM links; partner check-ins.

Revising your communications is a reality of communications efforts. It's not a sign of failure. Build feedback loops in early so you can correct mid-campaign – not afterwards.

PRO TIP

When something isn't working, diagnose at three levels: bad objective, bad strategy or bad execution. The fix is different for each. Don't tear down the strategy if the issue is execution. Don't double down on execution if the strategy is wrong.

Part 3. From knowledge to action

ANDE's audiences are sophisticated. They tend to know the issues. The challenge is rarely awareness; it's activation. Three stages move people from knowing to doing. Each requires different messaging.

3.1 Stage 1 | Sharing knowledge

Use this stage when an audience does not yet have enough context to engage. The aim is to get them to know, care and believe, not all three at once, but with enough confidence to consider acting.

- Don't overwhelm. More information is rarely the answer for audiences who already know an issue exists. Hyperbole and statistics-without-context cause people to disengage.
- Show respect. Don't browbeat. Suggest rather than insist. Present evidence and let the audience reach the conclusion you want.
- Use "social math" for big numbers. "More than the population of [familiar place]" beats "6.4 million" for most audiences.
- Make it personally relevant. Connect the issue to something the audience already cares about — their portfolio, their members, their region, their reputation, their bottom line.
- Avoid jargon and acronyms (or define them on first use). Keep language plain, FT-business-journalism style.
- Don't label the audience. They are members, partners, funders, researchers — not "advocates," "activists" or anything they wouldn't say about themselves.

3.2 Stage 2 | Building will

This is where most ANDE audiences are most often: knowledgeable, sympathetic, but not yet acting. The job is not to share more facts. It is to identify and dissolve the barrier: What is the deal-breaker? What is keeping action off the table? Identify it and target it.

Common ANDE-context barriers

- Time and bandwidth: the action looks heavy or unclear in scope.
- Risk to reputation or relationships: "will my board, peers or funders see this favorably?"
- Doubt that participation will matter: "my piece is too small."
- Confusion about what "good" looks like: no shared standard, no template, no starting point.
- Competing priority: the audience cares, but other things rank higher this quarter.

Tactics for moving from will to action

- Show peers already acting. Social proof is the most reliable lever. Lift up member examples, regional success cases, named adopters of a framework.
- Make the action feel manageable. Break it into a first step in their comfort zone (sign on; attend; complete a brief survey; share a single asset). Bigger asks come later, after the first action.
- Mitigate the perceived risk. Provide language they can use, brand-safe assets, examples of how a sign-on is positioned, what they get back.
- Show the win is in reach. Hope, not optimism. "Hopeful people don't wish; they imagine and act." Make the path concrete.
- Ask honest questions, not rhetorical ones. "What would make this easier for your team?" opens conversations. Closed pitches close them.

3.3 Stage 3 | Reinforcing action

When members or partners take action — register for a conference, contribute to a toolkit, sign onto a coalition, share a campaign asset — the response should be specific, prompt and visible. Reinforcement is what keeps an active audience active.

- **Praise specifically, not generically.** "Thanks for promoting the conference" matters far less than "Your post on X drove 240 registrations from your network."
- **Show what their action enabled.** Connect the action to a concrete outcome and to the value the audience cares about.

- **Celebrate small wins early and often.** Members and partners need to see that ANDE is winning, not just trying.
- **Make heroes, not bystanders.** Highlight individuals and organizations whose contributions made a difference. Asset-frame: contributions before challenges.
- **Continue to make it personal.** A note from the responsible staff member beats a generic confirmation. A short LinkedIn shoutout beats a logo on a page.

Reinforcement is not a one-time thing. Done well, it's the engine of the next campaign, because the audience that just acted is the most likely audience to act again.

Part 4. Building thought leadership from what we already know

ANDE generates a steady stream of intellectual capital: SCALE research, GALI analyses, ecosystem diagnostics, peer-learning insights, special briefs, conference content, regional learning products. Most of it never travels as far as it could. Thought leadership is the discipline of turning that knowledge into authority, and turning authority into resource flow.

Three principles, then four messaging formulas, then the amplification cycle.

4.1 Three principles for ANDE thought leadership

Pick your lane and own it

ANDE doesn't need to opine on everything. The lanes are the three Message House pillars. Every thought leadership push should fit clearly under one, and ideally cite the evidence drawer that proves it.

- **Member effectiveness** | "What works in ESO practice, and how do we know?"
- **Ecosystems that move resources** | "Where are the bottlenecks, and what unblocks them?"
- **Cross-sector pathways** | "How does intent become execution at scale?"

Start with strategy, not with the op-ed

Don't write first and figure out distribution later. Before drafting, answer six questions:

1. Whom are we trying to reach? Be specific. ("DFI portfolio managers in MENA who lead SGB allocations.")
2. What action do we want them to take?
3. Where does this audience get information? LinkedIn, sector newsletters, podcasts, regional outlets, peer convenings?
4. Who do they trust? Independent media, peers, multilateral voices, named experts?
5. Long-form, video, infographic, talk, panel, what form will they actually engage with?
6. What's the audience's core concern, and what barrier do we have to overcome?

Build connections, not just outputs

Audiences increasingly want to follow voices, not just read pieces. Pair institutional thought leadership with named human voices (researchers, regional leads, executive director) who can carry the same ideas across LinkedIn posts, podcasts, op-eds and panels. Consistency across voices and outputs is what builds trust over time.

4.2 Four messaging formulas

Different content goals call for different message structures. These four formulas, cover most of what ANDE does. Tailor each, ground it in ANDE's perspective, and layer them when needed.

Formula 1 | Making sense of complex issues

Use when the topic is technical or unfamiliar to the audience (capital pathways, blended finance structures, ESG metrics, ecosystem diagnostics). The audience needs a strong, clear voice that explains what's happening, why it matters, what's being done about it and whether they should act.

- Open with a concrete signal of what's at stake (a number, a member case, a moment in the field).
- Translate the technical concept in plain language: use a metaphor or anchor where useful.
- Connect to the audience's reality (their portfolio, region, decision).
- End with a clear path forward: what ANDE recommends, where to learn more, what to do next.

Formula 2 | Speaking truth to power

Use when the dominant narrative—set by larger institutions, capital allocators or media voices—is distorting how decisions get made about SGBs. The job is to ground commentary in real-world evidence and refuse hype-or-falsehood narratives.

- Name the assumption or claim under examination, fairly and specifically.
- Counter with ANDE evidence: research, diagnostics, member experience, regional data.
- Offer a more affirmative, more accurate framing for what's actually possible.
- Avoid moralizing. Restraint is more credible than indignation.

Formula 3 | Characterizing words and phrases

Use when terminology is co-opted, ambiguous or actively unhelpful. Many SGB-sector terms ("impact at scale," "market-based solutions," "investment readiness," "resilience") get used so loosely they lose meaning. Reclaiming, sharpening or **coining fresh language is itself a form of leadership**.

- **Name the slippage.** What does the term currently signal, and where is that misleading?
- **Offer a sharper definition** tied to a concrete behavior or evidence ("investment readiness, defined as X, Y and Z").
- **Use the new framing consistently** across pieces and platforms. Once is not enough.

Formula 4 | Sharing pathways to action

Use when ANDE has done the analysis and the audience needs to see what to do with it. Too much sector content stops at the diagnosis. ANDE's strength is **connecting ecosystem stakeholders and helping them in execution**, show it.

- **State the analysis or finding** briefly. Don't repeat what's already been published.
- **Lay out two to four concrete pathways** the audience can take — sequenced, with thresholds for who should pursue which.
- **Show the work**, what ANDE and its members are doing on each pathway.
- **End with the next step** the reader can take this week, this quarter, this year.

4.3 Leverage the amplification cycle

Placing an op-ed or publishing a brief is the first half of the work. Online media algorithms reward content that gets shared and discussed in the days after publication, not just the day of. Plan the amplification cycle from the start.

- **Pre-publication** | brief members, partners and named champions a week before. Give them ready-to-use copy and visuals.
- **Day-of** | coordinated launch across ANDE channels, leadership LinkedIn posts, member shares, partner cross-posts.
- **Days 2-7** | repackage the same idea in different formats: a quote card, a chart, a short video, a thread, a Q&A blog with the author, a podcast clip.
- **Weeks 2-4** | surface follow-up coverage, member responses and any decision-maker reaction. Convert traction into invitations to convene, present or partner.
- **Long tail** | fold the piece into the next newsletter, the next conference session, the next funder briefing. Strong content earns reuse.

4.4 ANDE evidence drawers | turning programs into proof

Evidence is the foundation of the Message House. When picking proof for a thought leadership piece, draw from these four drawers (and credit the source consistently across pieces):

- **Measurement and learning systems** | SCALE, GALI, peer learning programs, metrics labs.
- **Ecosystem diagnostics** | mapping, bottleneck analysis, regional landscape products.
- **Cross-sector mechanisms** | standards, guidance, procurement coalitions, partnerships routed through members.
- **Regional proof of execution** — named programs, convenings, member partnerships used as illustrations — never as the headline.

Regional proof is supporting evidence, not the headline. The headline is the resource flow it unlocked, the standard it advanced or the practice it changed.

Part 5. Planning a campaign that wins

A campaign is a concentrated, time-bound communications effort with a defined win condition — different from always-on communications. ANDE runs at least three kinds of campaigns each year: thematic-pillar campaigns aligned to the 2026 Communications Strategy, flagship-event campaigns (Annual Conference, regional convenings) and rapid-response campaigns triggered by sector moments. Nine steps.

5.1 Step 1 | Assemble the team

A campaign without a clear team is a campaign in trouble within two weeks. Ideally, build the team explicitly before kickoff. A team could be of two or more; however, the following roles or categories have to be filled:

- **Head (or co-head):** one accountable person who owns the strategy and execution arc.
- **Leadership:** the green-light givers (e.g., Managing Director, Head of Comms, regional director) who can make tough calls.
- **Input givers:** trusted advisors who bring perspective without owning decisions (programs leads, member relations, research).
- **Hard truth squad:** two or three people whose job is to flag weaknesses, challenge assumptions and stress-test messaging.
- **Doers:** the people building content, running channels, engaging members.
- **Personally impacted voices:** for ANDE this often means entrepreneurs, ESO practitioners or regional ecosystem actors. They are partners in shaping the campaign, not props in it.

5.2 Step 2 | Define the victory

Plan with the end in mind. State the aspirational goal (the long-term vision the campaign serves) and the concrete campaign win (the time-bound, measurable victory).

ASPIRATIONAL GOAL	CAMPAIGN TYPE	CAMPAIGN WIN
The SGB sector measures impact consistently and credibly.	Practice change	By Q4 2026, twelve member organizations adopt the new shared metrics framework in their annual reporting.
Procurement supply chains route demand to growth-ready SGBs.	Cross-sector pathway	By the close of the Annual Conference 2026, three new corporate procurement commitments are announced, each with named pipeline partners.
ANDE is the first call when funders shape SGB strategy.	Reputation / influence	Within 18 months, ANDE is cited in five DFI or government strategy documents related to SGB finance or ecosystem support.

Before locking in the campaign win, run a gut check with the hard truth squad. Is this viable? What's the cost of a loss? Who controls the variables? Is now the right moment, or should the campaign wait?

5.3 Step 3 | Evaluate the climate

Map the headwinds and tailwinds before charting the route.

State of the issue

- Is the issue hot, stuck or off the radar? Polling, donor conversations, sector chatter on LinkedIn. What's the temperature?

- Is the language polarized? Are there terms ANDE will need to reframe before campaigning?
- Is the field crowded? Who else is in this space, and are they aligned, neutral or competing?
- What upcoming moments could the campaign ride: anniversaries, summits, government cycles, major reports?
- Are there dedicated voices and channels (sector media beats, podcasters, influencer practitioners) already paying attention?
- Is the issue widely misunderstood? Is that due to a vacuum, or to active counter-messaging?

State of the opposition

Opposition for ANDE is rarely an organized opponent in the political sense. It tends to look like: skeptical capital allocators ("this isn't a real asset class"); narrow-frame development discourse ("SGBs are not poverty alleviation"); regulatory inertia; or competing organizations crowding the space. Map it honestly:

- If we succeed, who loses or feels displaced?
- Who agrees with the goal but disagrees with the approach?
- What are their main messages? What evidence do they have?
- What would they say about ANDE specifically?
- How can we proactively limit their ability to derail the campaign? Through coalitions, narrative work or pre-empting their strongest points?

5.4 Step 4 | Chart the course (milestones)

Most campaign wins require multiple milestones. A milestone is an outcome, what happens, not a tactic. "Release a report" is a tactic. "Three named DFI leaders publicly cite the report" is a milestone.

Sequence milestones logically. Some are sequential (you need the first to make the second possible); others can run in parallel. Examples for an ANDE-style policy or practice change campaign:

1. **ANDE evidence is published** in a digestible, journalistic form (long-form report, briefer, or ebook).
2. Three named member **organizations endorse** the framing in their own channels.
3. A regional **convening features the framing** as a working session and produces a **co-signed brief**.

4. Two DFI or government **counterparts request internal briefings** on the work.
5. A flagship op-ed or panel turns the framing into a **sector conversation**.
6. A **formal commitment**, statement or adoption is announced by the target decision-maker.

5.5 Step 5 | Choose the Influence strategy

For each milestone, identify the decision-maker who controls whether it happens, then decide how to influence them. Five typical levers in the ANDE context:

- Direct access – leadership conversation, briefing, partner meeting.
- Trusted intermediary – a member, a regional convener, a funder ANDE collaborates with.
- Evidence and rigor – published research, diagnostics or peer-reviewed analysis.
- Coalition signal – a co-signed statement, joint commitment, multi-organization endorsement.
- Public conversation – earned media, social campaign or named-voice op-eds that change the air around the decision.

Match levers to milestones. Sum up the influence strategy in one or two sentences before the team starts brainstorming tactics. ("We will move this milestone by leveraging X member voices and Y evidence base, sequenced through Z convening, to reach the decision-maker via her trusted policy advisor.")

Optimal timing

- Organic timing – anniversaries, multilateral cycles, regional summits, awareness months that the campaign can ride.
- Invented timing – moments ANDE creates: a launch week, a learning series, an awareness day.
- Both are legitimate. The mistake is assuming everything has to be invented.

5.6 Step 6 | Navigate collaboration and opposition

List the capabilities the campaign needs and check them against what ANDE can supply alone. The gap is your coalition. Then check who, beyond ANDE, has standing relationships with the decision-makers identified in Step 5.

Who do you collaborate with?

- Who do we need to win this, and to keep the win from rolling back later?

- Who would we like to build a relationship with via this campaign?
- Are the communities directly impacted (entrepreneurs, regional ESOs) full partners in shaping the campaign – not just beneficiaries of it?

Opposition management

- Which narratives or claims must we get the upper hand on – and which can we ignore?
- Which allies' voices defuse the opposition's strongest points without ANDE having to engage directly?
- Which facts, examples or data shrink the opposition's footing?

5.7 Step 7 | Craft the campaign messaging

Strong campaigns build a four-point messaging platform that all spokespeople, members and partners use consistently. Word-for-word memorization is not the goal; conceptual alignment is.

- **1. The need or opportunity.** What's the gap or moment the campaign is responding to?
- **2. What we are doing.** What is the campaign accomplishing?
- **3. How we do it.** What specific actions are we asking decision-makers and partners to take, and by when?
- **4. Vision.** What changes if we win?

Phrase the messaging asset-first: define what's possible and what ANDE and its members are building, before naming what's broken. This makes the platform usable across audiences with different politics, including unexpected allies.

Campaign name and identity

If the campaign is highly visible, a clear, accurate name does heavy lifting. ANDE-friendly approaches:

- **Reframe the challenge as an opportunity.** ("Pathways to Procurement" beats "Closing the SGB Procurement Gap.")
- **Build on a relevant number or threshold.** ("3-by-3" – three commitments by three sectors.)
- **Anchor in a Message House phrase.** ("Resources That Move," "Evidence That Travels.")

- **Avoid forced acronyms.** They're rarely as clever in the room as they seemed in the brainstorm.

Level of visibility

Some campaigns need high public visibility to build pressure or momentum. Others move better with low visibility — quiet partner outreach, targeted briefings, behind-the-scenes coalition building. Decide deliberately. Quiet campaigns are not failures; they are a strategic choice.

Campaign visuals

Treat visuals as part of messaging, not as decoration. The look, color and tone signal credibility and intent. (Part 6 covers visual decisions in depth.)

Test the messaging

- **Internal** | Does the platform stand up to opposition? Where might it create unintended reads?
- **Trusted allies** | Share with two to four people who reflect the audience. Do they hear what you intended?
- **A/B test** | When stakes are high, test variants on social or with email lists before scaling.

5.8 Step 8 | Manage the campaign

Build a master strategy chart that pairs each milestone with assignments, deadline, metrics (outputs and outcomes), expected results and budget. Then run weekly check-ins with the campaign team and quarterly check-ins with leadership.

Weekly check-in questions

- Did we execute the activities planned since last meeting? Are we closer to the next milestone? If not, what shifts?
- Have any decision-makers or influencers moved? For or against?
- Are there new vulnerabilities or opportunities to incorporate?
- Any wins worth surfacing internally to keep momentum?

Quarterly check-in questions

- Is the overarching strategy still realistic given changes in the landscape?
- Are partner organizations pulling their weight? Should we add or step back from any?

- Do we need to renegotiate scope, timeline or resources with leadership?

5.9 Step 9 | Plan for after the campaign

Win or lose, the moment after the campaign matters as much as the launch. Five things successful campaigners always do:

1. **Thank supporters**, publicly and privately. Specific thanks beats generic appreciation.
2. **Make space to celebrate**, internally with the team, externally with partners.
3. **Capture lessons learned**, in writing, with examples, while it's still fresh.
4. **Share honest stories** with funders, leadership and stakeholders, including what didn't land.
5. **Plan the next move**, the campaign just built relationships, capacity, lists and credibility. Use them.

If the campaign falls short, the discipline is the same. Find the glimmers (surfaced supporters, useful coverage, stronger messaging) and document why specific elements did or didn't land. A loss with a debrief is the down payment on the next win.

Part 6. Visual communication and brand consistency

Images carry the same weight as words. The brain processes them in the same place it processes emotion, which is why a chart, a photo, or a logo can land what a paragraph cannot. The standard is the same as for the editorial voice: clear, evidence-led, restrained, distinctly ANDE.

6.1 Three visual goals | and which one drives the piece

- **Behavior change:** show the action you want the audience to take. Be specific. Avoid showing the wrong behavior, even to mock it.
- **Practice or policy change:** make the case visually. A chart that turns dry data into a clear pattern, a photo that puts a face on a region's growth-ready entrepreneurs.
- **Build reputation:** consistent visual choices that make ANDE recognizable across regions, languages and channels.

6.2 Photos

Aim for a high ratio of authentic, candid photos to staged ones. People in action (running a workshop, advising an entrepreneur, delivering a session) beat the empty group-photo-with-banner every time.

- **Show faces.** Faces are the fastest way for an audience to connect.
- **Show action.** Get close, fill the frame with the activity.
- **Show results.** Visual markers of change: a finished workshop, an entrepreneur in their place of business, a regional convening in mid-discussion.
- **Be intentional about who appears** in positions of leadership and expertise. Photos signal who matters.
- **Build a five-photo "go-to" set** per region or program for repeated use across the year, plus a wider library.
- **Always credit and** always have **written consent**. Maintain a photo release form template (worksheet section).
- **Skip stock photo clichés** (people pointing at laptops, posed handshakes, stock-image warehouses).

6.3 Color

Color is signal. Use ANDE's brand palette consistently. Add complementary colors deliberately, not by mood. When in doubt, fewer colors per piece beat more.

- Use the primary palette for institutional content (reports, conference assets, official statements).
- Use secondary colors as accents, not as headlines.
- Be aware of regional and cultural color associations when designing for chapter-specific audiences.

6.4 Fonts

Identify two or three fonts as the organization's primary set. Do not use more than that across a single piece. The brain reads consistent type as professionalism; mixed type as a ransom note.

- **Serif fonts** convey formal and traditional. Good for long-form printed materials.
- **Sans-serif fonts** feel modern and digital. Default for headlines, decks, web and social.
- **Use weight** and size, not new fonts, to create hierarchy.
- **Avoid decorative** or display fonts unless purposefully designed into a campaign identity.

6.5 Logos

ANDE's logo is a promise. Treat it that way. When co-branding with members, partners or funders, follow the lock-up guidance in the brand kit. Never stretch, recolor (unless codified that way for context, readability and intention) or place over busy backgrounds.

6.6 Video

Video is a powerful tool, but it's not the answer to every communication problem. Before producing, ask:

- Whose story does this tell? Can the people we serve speak first-person, in their own voice?
- Will it move audiences in a way other formats cannot?
- Do we know our audience consumes and trusts video?

Two formats to plan for

- **Call-to-action / update video (60 seconds or less)** – single message, single emotion, single ask. Smartphone-shot is fine; authenticity beats polish.

- **Explanatory narrative (2–5 minutes)** – tells a story or collection of stories with arc: opportunity, what we're doing, how it lands, the call to action.

Invest in a wired lapel microphone, a tripod and a basic LED light before investing in a high-end camera. Audio quality and stable framing make the biggest difference for low-budget video.

6.7 Brand consistency across regions and languages

ANDE communicates in multiple languages and from multiple regional chapters. The principle: one coherent voice, locally adapted. Avoid two failure modes – sterile uniformity that ignores regional context, and free-for-all that erodes recognizability.

- Translation is editorial. Spanish, Portuguese, French and other-language content should be edited by a native speaker against the same Editorial Guidelines, not just translated word-for-word.
- Regional examples and references should lead in regional content; global frames should always be present but not crowd out the local.
- Visual identity is shared across regions; image content (faces, places) is regionally specific.

Part 7. Social media execution

Social is where most ANDE audiences encounter the organization day-to-day. Treat it as the front line of the strategy, not the leftover budget. Two principles set the standard before any platform-specific guidance: every post should connect to a Message House pillar, and every post should pass the editorial voice test.

7.1 Channel logic for ANDE

CHANNEL	STRONGEST FOR	TONE NOTES
LinkedIn	Thought leadership, member visibility, partner amplification, recruiting talent and partnerships.	Most professional. Long-form posts work. Lead with the insight; cite evidence; tag relevant members and partners.
X / Twitter	Real-time conference and event amplification; sector chatter; quick threads; signaling expertise to journalists.	Concise (≤ 280 chars). Threads can carry depth. Less paid distribution power than it had; treat as a megaphone, not a campaign engine.
Instagram	Conference visuals, regional storytelling, behind-the-scenes from convenings, entrepreneur features.	Image-led. Captions can be longer. Reels for events. Limit copy density.
Facebook	Regional and chapter community building, especially in markets	Slightly more conversational. Good for

CHANNEL	STRONGEST FOR	tone notes
	where Facebook usage remains high.	events and regional resources.
Threads/BlueSky (if ANDE opens the channels)	Lighter cross-posting from Instagram and X. Currently low-effort secondary channel for ANDE.	Match the tone of the parent post.

7.2 Post anatomy — what good looks like

- **Lead with the news, not the framing.** Open with what's actually new — the result, the launch, the finding — not with "At ANDE, we're committed to..."
- **One main point per post.** Posts that try to do five things do none.
- **Specific numbers, names and places.** "Twelve members across four regions" beats "a wide range of members."
- **Clear call to action.** Register, download, read, RSVP, share. Avoid weak CTAs ("learn more," "check it out," "click here").
- **Assets that match.** If the post is about the conference, show the conference. If it's a research finding, lead with a chart or quote card.
- **Tag the actors.** Tag members, partners, speakers — but only the right accounts. Don't spam.
- **Emojis sparingly.** ANDE social uses 📍 and 📅 when needed and avoids the rest. Newsletters use no emojis.

7.3 Building a campaign on social

A social campaign is not a string of posts. It's a structured push with a defined start, middle and end. Five steps:

6. Find the right anchor. The campaign should ride a real story or moment → a launch, a release, a milestone, a flagship event. Not just "it's our social cadence."
7. Set the tone deliberately. ANDE social is journalistic and warm, not promotional. Match the platform → LinkedIn permits more depth than X.

8. Build shareable assets. Quote cards, charts, short videos, partner-customizable templates. Visuals that travel.
9. Plan the publishing grid. Sequence: tease → launch → reinforce → recap. Two posts per weekday is a typical conference push; less for sustained quarterly campaigns.
10. Track, learn, adjust. Review which posts performed; iterate on copy and visual style. Don't keep posting at a frequency that's training the audience to ignore you.

7.4 Member and partner toolkits

ANDE multiplies through members. A good partner toolkit makes it easy for a member organization to participate. At minimum, include:

- Three to five copy variants per channel (LinkedIn, X, Instagram, Facebook), with character counts.
- Approved visuals at the right dimensions for each channel.
- Hashtags and tagged accounts.
- UTM-tagged links for tracking.
- A short "why this matters" framing line so partners can adapt copy without losing the message.
- A clear timeline (when to post, when to amplify).
- Where applicable, bilingual or multi-language versions.

7.5 Riding moments — when storylines and the news cycle move

Sometimes a sector story, a member's news, a piece of regulation or a high-profile event aligns with ANDE's work. When it does, move within hours, not days.

- Have draft post templates ready for the most likely scenarios (a member receives a major award; a major report aligns with ANDE work; a regional government adopts a relevant policy).
- Pre-clear approval paths. Who signs off on a same-day post during the Annual Conference? Who can authorize a rapid-response thread on LinkedIn?
- Don't force the connection. If the story doesn't credibly fit a Message House pillar, skip it.
- Bask in the afterglow — when a post performs, follow up within a week with a deeper piece (blog, newsletter feature, member spotlight) to extend the moment.

Part 8. Crisis prep and management

ANDE is a credible network. Most days that credibility is an asset; on the days something goes wrong, it becomes the thing under threat. Crisis preparation is not pessimism – it's stewardship. A small amount of work in calm conditions saves an enormous amount of work in heat.

The Spitfire Smart Plan four-step structure adapted for ANDE: assess risk; assess opposition and internal vulnerabilities; minimize risk; maximize strengths.

8.1 Assess the risk landscape

Run through these questions periodically (quarterly is reasonable; before a high-profile launch is essential):

- Does ANDE or this initiative have organized opposition or visible critics?
- Is the issue politically charged, polarizing or controversial in a particular region?
- Is the topic on the political or media agenda in a way that increases scrutiny?
- Does ANDE get frequent media attention, positive or negative?
- Are high-profile board members, advisors or partners visible enough that their personal controversies could reflect on the organization?
- Are member organizations or affiliated communities frequent targets of harassment or disinformation campaigns?
- Are internal systems buttoned down – social media policy, HR training, board guidance, comms response protocols?

More yeses mean more preparation. The point is not to score the risk; it is to surface where preparation is missing.

8.2 Assess opposition and internal vulnerabilities

External – opposition tracking

Most ANDE "opposition" is not adversarial in a political sense. It's narrative competition, sectoral skepticism, or organized critics of a specific policy or partner ANDE supports. Still, treat it like the Spitfire model recommends:

- Track the websites, newsletters and social channels of organizations or commentators that consistently challenge SGB-sector framing.

- Monitor sector-specific outlets and influential individuals who shape narratives that affect resource flow to SGBs.
- Set Google Alerts and a monitoring tool for ANDE's name, leadership names and flagship initiatives.
- Develop a one-page dossier on any persistent critic or opposition voice → strengths, weaknesses, past attacks, predictable tactics.

Internal – vulnerability mapping

Internal crises are often more damaging than external ones. Map the most likely scenarios honestly:

- Leadership transitions or unexpected departures.
- Mishandled internal operations (financial, HR, governance) that surface publicly.
- Staff or board member personal controversy that reflects on the organization.
- Social media missteps from official or personal accounts.
- Member crisis with reputational spillover (partner under investigation, partner program failure).
- Data security incident.

For each, estimate plausibility and potential damage. Not all need active mitigation. The high-plausibility, high-damage scenarios deserve a one-page response sketch ahead of time.

8.3 Minimize risk

- Have legal counsel train staff on what (c)(3) advocacy permits and what crosses into lobbying.
- Vet email lists and event registration to know who's receiving sensitive information.
- Treat every external draft as if a journalist or critic might one day read it.
- Maintain a current social media policy and review it during onboarding.
- Maintain a current media response policy – who can talk to reporters, who routes inquiries, who approves public statements.
- Train staff in a basic conflict-of-interest framework so partnerships and personal positions don't create surprise.

8.4 Maximize strengths

In a crisis, ANDE's most valuable assets are the relationships and credibility built outside the crisis. The work to do them well happens before, not during.

- **Supporters and members** – feed the loyal core regularly. Recognize, thank, invite. The members who'll stand up for ANDE under pressure are the ones who feel seen the rest of the year.
- **Online presence** – an engaged social audience can disseminate a clear response within minutes. A dormant audience cannot.
- **Coalition partners** – show up for theirs so they show up for ANDE. Sign on to letters, share their content, attend their events.
- **Journalists** – build a small set of trusted reporters who cover SGBs, development finance and ESOs. Send them background, share their fair coverage, brief them when there's no story to pitch.
- **Policymakers and decision-makers** – in the same way: cultivate trust outside crisis windows so it's there when needed.

8.5 Decision matrix | Is this actually a crisis?

Not every problem is a crisis. Saying so is its own discipline. Run the moment against these eight questions:

1. Will ANDE's reputation be harmed?
2. Will the impact extend beyond the organization (to members, partners, funders)?
3. Will there be media attention?
4. Will partners, members or funders pull back?
5. Will it become a trending or sustained social conversation?
6. Does the situation pose a danger or threaten harm to anyone?
7. Will it reduce staff, board or external trust meaningfully?
8. Is silence likely to make it worse?

If the answer to any of these is yes, treat it as a crisis. If the answers are all no, it's a distraction. The discipline of nonengagement is sometimes the strategy.

8.6 If it's a crisis | the response

- Convene the core crisis team immediately. Keep it small enough to make decisions: executive leadership, communications director, the most relevant subject lead, legal if relevant, board chair if escalation is likely.
- Gather facts before responding. Determine credibility of the accusation or accuser.
- Decide what goes in writing and what stays verbal. Email and printed memos can be subpoenaed or leaked.

- Pick the messenger carefully. The person who responds publicly should have direct knowledge and authority. Avoid tokenism – never use someone's identity as a shortcut to credibility on a charge they don't own.
- Tailor the message to each audience: staff first, then members and partners, then external. Internal alignment shows up externally.
- Match tone to the audience's emotional state. A scared audience needs to see calm. An angry audience needs to see anger acknowledged. An audience angry at ANDE needs to see honest accountability.
- Bridge back to ANDE's core messaging. A crisis is a hard moment to introduce new positioning; lean into the Message House.
- Continue monitoring. Adjust the response as facts change. Meet daily until the heat fades; debrief afterward.



Saying nothing speaks volumes. "No comment" reads as guilt or evasion. Even a holding statement – "we're aware of the report and are reviewing the facts" – buys time without surrendering the field.

Part 9. Worksheets and quick reference

Use these worksheets in planning sessions, briefings, kickoffs, and chapter-level workshops. They are not paperwork — they are the prompts that surface the assumptions a draft is hiding.

9.1 The strategic communications one-pager

9.2 Audience analysis worksheet

9.3 Campaign plan template

9.4 Editorial checklist for any ANDE piece

9.5 Crisis response worksheet

9.6 The hard truth squad's standing questions

9.1 The strategic communications one-pager

Fill this out before any communications plan, campaign brief or major content push.

1. Goal (long-term)	<i>What's the long-term change this work serves?</i>
2. SMART objective	<i>Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound. Within 12–18 months.</i>
3. Decision-maker	<i>One named person (not an institution) who can say yes to the objective.</i>
4. Internal scan – assets	<i>Reputation, network, evidence, capacity, stories.</i>
5. Internal scan – constraints	<i>Where we are stretched, behind or unclear.</i>
6. External scan – opportunities	<i>Timing hooks, favorable trends, allies.</i>
7. External scan – risks	<i>Opposition, polarization, misperception, competing voices.</i>
8. Frame decision	<i>New conversation, fortify existing, or reframe a losing one.</i>
9. Priority audiences	<i>Specific segments – role, geography, psychographic.</i>
10. Audience readiness	<i>Sharing knowledge / Building will / Reinforcing action.</i>
11. Audience values	<i>Core concern; what they care about most.</i>
12. Audience barrier	<i>The single deal-breaker we have to overcome.</i>
13. Message box – value	<i>Connects to the audience's value.</i>

14. Message box – barrier	<i>Addresses the barrier without repeating it.</i>
15. Message box – ask	<i>One specific, doable action.</i>
16. Message box – vision	<i>What changes if they act.</i>
17. Messenger(s)	<i>Who delivers the message; why they're credible to this audience.</i>
18. Tactics	<i>Channels, formats, sequence.</i>
19. Timing	<i>Guaranteed, invented and unexpected windows.</i>
20. Owner & deadlines	<i>Who owns each tactic; when.</i>
21. Budget	<i>Money and staff time.</i>
22. Outputs	<i>What we will produce/do.</i>
23. Outcomes	<i>What we expect to happen because of those outputs.</i>
24. Message House pillar	<i>Which pillar this serves; which evidence drawer it draws from.</i>

9.2 Audience analysis worksheet

Complete one per priority audience. If two segments have meaningfully different barriers or values, complete two.

Audience name (specific)	<i>e.g., DFI portfolio managers in MENA who lead SGB allocations.</i>
What does this audience already know?	<i>What can we assume; what do we have to introduce?</i>
What do they believe?	<i>Trust in ANDE; trust in the evidence; existing assumptions about SGBs.</i>
What do they care about most?	<i>The value to tap into.</i>
What's the deal-breaker barrier?	<i>Time, risk, doubt, competing priority, technical confusion.</i>
Where do they get information?	<i>LinkedIn, sector newsletters, peer convenings, regional outlets.</i>
Whom do they trust?	<i>Peer voices, named experts, multilateral institutions, independent media.</i>
Readiness stage	<i>Sharing knowledge / Building will / Reinforcing action.</i>
Best-fit messenger(s)	<i>Peer, in-group community member, topic expert, ANDE staff.</i>
Best-fit format	<i>Long-form, video, op-ed, panel, brief, infographic, podcast.</i>

9.3 Campaign plan template

Campaign title	
Aspirational goal	<i>5–10 year vision the campaign serves.</i>
Concrete campaign win	<i>Time-bound, measurable victory.</i>
Campaign type	<i>Practice change / policy change / cross-sector pathway / behavior change / fundraising / reputation.</i>
Campaign team – Lead	<i>One accountable person.</i>
Campaign team – Leadership / Hard truth squad / Doers / Personally impacted voices	<i>Named roles.</i>
State of the issue	<i>Hot / stuck / cold; favorable / hostile coverage; field crowding; misperception.</i>
State of the opposition	<i>Who loses if we win; their messages; their evidence; their predictable tactics.</i>
Milestones	<i>Outcomes (not tactics), in sequence.</i>
Influence strategy per milestone	<i>One-sentence summary of the approach.</i>

Coalition partners	<i>Who fills capability gaps; who has standing relationships with decision-makers.</i>
Opposition management	<i>Narratives we'll get the upper hand on; allies that defuse.</i>
Messaging platform	<i>1) Need / opportunity. 2) What we are doing. 3) How we do it. 4) Vision.</i>
Campaign name and identity	<i>Final name; tone; emotion to evoke; visual approach.</i>
Visibility level	<i>High public / medium / quiet / hybrid by phase.</i>
Master strategy chart	<i>Per milestone: assignments, deadline, outputs, outcomes, results, budget.</i>
After-the-campaign plan	<i>Win, loss and partial-win scenarios; thanks; lessons; next move.</i>

9.4 Editorial checklist for any ANDE piece

- ☐ Lead is news, not framing.
- ☐ Connects to a Message House pillar (named in the brief, not just implied).
- ☐ Cites a specific evidence drawer where possible.
- ☐ Specific numbers, names, places, dates.
- ☐ No hype words unless the facts justify them.
- ☐ Headline is engaging and accurate; deck/summary in 30 words or less.
- ☐ First paragraph is provocative and storytelling, not a corporate intro.
- ☐ American English (or regional English where deliberately chosen).
- ☐ Acronyms spelled out on first use; jargon defined.
- ☐ Clear, doable call to action.
- ☐ Visuals chosen, not defaulted; aligned with brand and message.
- ☐ If translated, edited by a native speaker against the same Editorial Guidelines.
- ☐ Reviewed by at least one fresh pair of eyes before publication.

9.5 Crisis response worksheet

What happened?	<i>Facts only. Date, time, source, scope.</i>
What information do we still need?	<i>What we don't yet know.</i>
Who needs to be told? In what order?	<i>Crisis team → leadership → staff → members and partners → external.</i>
What is our main message?	<i>One sentence. Tied back to ANDE's core messaging.</i>
What is the opposition / critic message?	<i>Their words, fairly stated.</i>
What is our response strategy per audience?	<i>Internal staff / board / members / partners / press / public.</i>
Who is the messenger?	<i>Authority + direct knowledge.</i>
Channel and timing per audience	<i>Email, statement, social, in-person; when.</i>
What is the ask, if any?	<i>What we want each audience to do.</i>
When do we meet again?	<i>Daily during the acute phase.</i>

9.6 The hard truth squad's standing questions

Read these aloud at the start of any planning session. Answers should be brief, direct and on the record.

1. Is this the right campaign for now?
2. Is ANDE the right organization to lead it?
3. What does the opposition or skeptic say — fairly stated — and what is our honest response?
4. What evidence are we leaning on, and how strong is it really?
5. Who's missing from this room who should be here?
6. If this fails, what's the cost? Can we recover?
7. What's the smallest version of this campaign that would still constitute a win?

End of playbook.

Developed by [Roger Santodomingo](#), Head of Global Communications.

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Maintained by the ANDE Communications Team.

Review and refresh annually, alongside the Message House and Editorial Guidelines, or whenever the Communications Strategy is updated.