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Communication; the key to success?

Does the communication strategy of NGOs
have an impact on their performance?

Estudiante: Blanca Fierro Álvarez-Ossorio

Dirección: Verónica Hurtado Oldridge

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1. Introduction

Developed countries mainly experience the hardships of people in poverty from the prism of NGOs. The Biafra War of 1967 and the Ethiopian famine of 1984 are examples of the first times the population in western countries were shocked with the images of poverty from the African continent. This effect led to the rise of NGOs, as a tendency of philanthropic deeds started where the western public empathized with a distant cause, and with their monetary contributions they could help solve a crisis in a distant country (Clark, 2009).

However, since then, the strategies of communication of NGOs have changed, adapting to the new challenges they were facing from the communication standpoint. Greater number of NGOs in the field trying to raise funds from the same overexploited audience, led to a greater competition in NGOs, which translated into new communicational strategies that attempted to stand out from the rest of the organizations.

Therefore, while organizations are facing the challenge of attracting a greater number of donors, they still have the responsibility of accurately communicating the reality of developing countries. Thus, how organizations communicate the humanitarian crisis happening abroad, is how people in the receiving countries will perceive it.

This project intends to find an answer to the question Does the communication strategy of NGOs have an impact on their performance? In this project, the metrics used to assess the performance of the organizations are demonstrable impact of communication campaign on fundraising, easiness to create new partnerships and number of new members subscribed. In order to answer the research question, in section 3, we are going to define humanitarian communication, the main communicational strategies of NGOs and the principal challenges that organizations face nowadays. Furthermore, an in-depth analysis of three different organizations will be made where their fundraising, communicational strategy, and ability to attract new partnerships and donor will be studied in section 6. Finally, this study concludes that communication strategy does influence the performance of NGOs, being the most successful strategies those that generate a greater impact on the audience and appeal to their emotions.

2. Purpose and Motivation

The purposes of NGOs are varied. They are most known for contributing to the welfare or the improvement of people's lives, a particular environmental situation or as a relief effort after a human made or natural catastrophe. Nonetheless, as a secondary objective, NGOs often serve as key communicators of the reality in a particular crisis, sometimes being the only actors communicating it. Hence, their communication strategy is fundamental as it serves as the only outlet and filter for the awareness of the situation in the West. In this regard, NGOs hold a big responsibility in the shaping of the perception of a crisis. Due to this, and added to the fact that it is not the main activity of NGOs, and therefore not as studied, it is fundamental to analyze the performance of this aspect and the implications of it.

Historically, there have been a few examples of success where NGOs contributed greatly to the improvement of welfare through communication by raising global awareness, namely the movement against the apartheid in South Africa, the Mexican Zapatista, the movement to abolish land mines and the Free the Tibet campaign (Thrall, Stecula, & Sweet, 2014). However, as there has been a history of success, there are also cases of failure. In these situations, if managed incorrectly NGO communication can contribute to the spread of stereotypes of underdevelopment and poverty, harm the dignity of the affected populations by politicizing their suffering and even difficult their development.

Thereafter, due to the importance afore mentioned that communication has specifically in the development of NGOs, the objective of this project is to determine whether there is a correlation between the funds and efforts invested into communication and the success of an organization. In order to do so, the object of the study is going to be three of the major NGOs with international and national presence, where their communication strategies in the last five years are going to be studied with the objective of determining the impact of the communication choices. By studying this, we can come to the realization of whether NGOs need to invest more funds into their communication strategies in order to be more successful, or if on the other hand, there is no direct correlation. These NGOs are Doctors Without Borders, Vicente Ferrer Foundation and Action Against Hunger.

In relation to the motives behind the choosing of the organizations of study, it was important that the organizations had some common factors among which you could compare them, in this case, all three organizations share a strong communicational presence among several channels and heavily invest in fundraising, therefore they make strong communication efforts.

Nonetheless, the organizations also have differentiating factors so that the conclusions reached in this project could be extrapolated to other organizations. These are the size, number of partners and origin of the funds. In addition, these organizations were also chosen due to their transparency efforts, they all provide in their annual memories information about their costs and income, along with audited financial statements, which facilitates the stronghold analysis if this project. Furthermore, the three of them have a prominent social media presence, make significant fundraising efforts in Spain but that carry out their major activity abroad. Hence, it is interesting to study how they communicate the message and get fundraising for a distant cause.

3. State of the Art and Theoretical Framework

3.1 Definition of humanitarian communication.

Chouliaraki (2010) defines humanitarian communication as “a mode of public communication ... aims at establishing a strategic emotional relationship between a Westerner and a distant sufferer with a view to propose certain dispositions to action towards a cause”.

We can highlight several elements in this definition. Firstly, the objective of the communication is to create emotional connections, having other objectives excluded, such as informing the receivers of a crisis, catastrophe or conflict, nonetheless, this objective can be pursued through other means that differ from emotional relations. Secondly, this definition establishes that the agents involved are a Westerner receiver and a “distant sufferer”, excluding in this way, the humanitarian communication that might take place within a same country, region and town. Thirdly, it states as a final objective of creating a response in the receiver in the form of an action. Finally, this definition makes no reference to what agents, or what types of institutions, should be involved as senders of the message containing the humanitarian communication.

Furthermore, humanitarian communication can more simply be understood as the set of strategies that NGOs use with the objective of reaching the public (Jong, 2018).

Moreover, several techniques have been used by NGOs in the pursuit of the representation of poverty and development. Representation is defined by Hall (1997) as “the production of meaning of the concepts in our minds through languages ... which enables us to refer to either the real world of objects, people, and events or indeed to an imaginary world of fictional objects, people and events.” This is very well illustrated by Borgerson and Schroeder (2002), who explain that ‘representations have the power to make us believe that we know something of which we have no experience’. Nonetheless, this can sometimes be misleading if we use representation under premises that are false or biased, leading to the spread of stereotypes and oversimplification of poverty. The use of representation for conveying a message has been widely used by organizations historically, creating several trends with pattern of communication.

3.2 Evolution of the external communication in NGOs

During the 1980s we experience a surge in the number of NGOs in the international arena. This is the result of an increase in awareness amongst the general population in the West of humanitarian crises in the developing world, which is in itself due to an exponential increase in representation in the media of these issues. In addition, an increase of natural disasters in this time led to an increase on the presence of NGOs in the field. With the emergence of NGOs, the concept of humanitarian communication appears.

Through the history of NGOs from its existence to the present, scholarly studies in humanitarian communication have observed an evolution in the communication patterns, and have divided them into three different movements or waves, with their own characteristics. These are the shock effect, deliberate positivism, and post-humanitarian sensibility. According to Chouliaraki (2010) humanitarian communication does not follow a linear process in the transition between the different stages. Instead, the phases can be superseded one to the other. Nonwithstanding, she argues that there is a transition from an emotion based strategy into a post-emotional style. As we will see in section 6, these three communication strategies are still broadly used nowadays, superposed and with a strong emotional component still present.

3.2.1 The shock effect

The shock effect is the first trend that can be appreciated with the emergence of NGOs. It was mainly and broadly being used during the 1980s and 1990s. The main objective of this trend of humanitarian communication was to create a “shock effect” that will maximize the emotional connection with the Western public (Cohen, 2001), (Dogra, 2007). Furthermore, this trend was characterized by the use of imagery that represented an innocent victim, typically a starving child, who was not fully clothed and living in a precarious situation without access to infrastructure nor resources of any kind.

The Ethiopian famine of 1984 is considered to be the major key event in the use of the shock effect and in the representation of poverty, it was the first major coverage of the African continent and the visualization of poverty (Clark, 2009). During this time, Western media and NGOs shared images of the precarious conditions people were living in as a consequence of the famine, sharing images of malnourished and starving children. Clark (2009) argues how

the communication of the NGOs during this crisis exacerbated an image of duality, where it could be contrasted the “passive Ethiopian victims” and the “enthusiastic philanthropic deeds”.

The use of the “shock effect” created a sense of moral responsibility towards the “distant poor” in the western public (Chouliaraki, *The Spectatorship of Suffering*, 2006), while appealing to the emotional effect that the images had in the receivers. This made the use of images during the shock effect period highly effective in the short-term fundraising (Hoijer, 2004).

Nonetheless, this trend has been broadly criticized due to several factors. Firstly, this trend promotes the sharing of the image of the “ideal victim”, this is someone with whom it is easiest to empathize and that will create the biggest impact in the public. This ideal victim is characterized by being nameless, which erases the dignity of the person by being objectified and generalizing their individual suffering, and typically being portrayed by women or children as it creates a greater sense of sympathy from the western public (Hoijer, 2004) while men don’t, as they are typically being associated with other factors or as being the cause of the problem in the first place. According to Cohen (2001), this ideal victim has been transformed into the “universal icon of suffering”.

Secondly, it has been argued that it puts the misery of people on display (Vestergaard, *Humanitarian Appeal and the Paradox of Power*, 2013) and as a result of this, it widens the gap between “us” and “them” as the people are represented as helpless and passive victims (Mahadeo & McKinney, 2007). Besides, it foments the dependency on Western donors (Cohen, 2001).

Nonetheless, these practices have been deemed as widely unethical, hence, the “shock effect” period led to the establishment of codes of conduct of NGOs on the humanitarian communication. These set standards on the use of imageries, representations, and messages with the objective of respecting human dignity and avoid the spread of stereotypes. The codes of conduct avoid harming the dignity of the victims, fomenting stereotypes and discrimination against aid recipients (Vestergaard, *Humanitarian Appeal and the Paradox of Power*, 2013).

3.2.2 Deliberate positivism

After the previous trend we can appreciate a shift in the tendencies into the use of positive imageries, known as deliberate positivism. This tendency was particularly used along the 20th century. This tendency can be understood as having the objective of showcasing donors the

effects that their donations have had (Chouliaraki, *Post-humanitarianism. Humanitarian communication beyond a politics of pity*, 2010). During this trend we can appreciate certain similitudes and differences from the shock effect period.

On one side, regarding the differences, in this trend we can appreciate a change in the representations of the receivers of aid. During this stage we move from the pessimistic, passive, and hopeless representation to a portrayal of people as active, hopeful, resilient and thankful for the aid (Chouliaraki, *Post-humanitarianism. Humanitarian communication beyond a politics of pity*, 2010) (Orgad, 2013). Furthermore, as a consequence of the critiques received in the management of the communication of the Ethiopian famine, we can appreciate that the anonymity of the people affected is reduced, in this period, the personal stories of individuals are introduced.

On the other side, in relation to the similitudes to the shock effect period, the focus on women and children is still maintained as attractors of the sympathy of the donors. The critique that the strategy foments the gap between “us” and “them” is still maintained. However, in this case, it is because the representation of people in a grateful and happy manner emphasized the idea that the receivers are happy due to the aid received (Chouliaraki, *The Spectatorship of Suffering*, 2006) (Orgad, 2013) and how, if they stop receiving it, they will be miserable. In this regard, it is argued that the “ideal victim” concept is still being emphasized even though the people are not being showcased in a negative manner (Vestergaard, 2008). Moreover, the problem of the oversimplification of the problem is still maintained and the focus is shifted into the positive impact that the western donations have had (Chouliaraki, *Post-humanitarianism. Humanitarian communication beyond a politics of pity*, 2010).

3.2.3 Post-humanitarian sensibility

The latest phase that was developed in humanitarian communication strategies is the post-humanitarian sensibility phase, in which Chouliaraki (2010) argues we are in nowadays. This phase is characterized by a non-linear transition from emotional styles to post-emotional styles of appealing. In addition, this phase originated as a result of online communication. The introduction of the internet as a new channel of communication for NGOs led to a significant increase of the competitiveness in the market sector. The increase of the competitiveness made NGOs adapt their communication style, by using business strategies, incorporating techniques such as marketing and advertising to maximize the reach of their message to a broader public

(Hoijer, 2004). In addition, NGOs adapted more commercial communication strategies that led them to the development of a well-defined brand to establish a differentiating factor from the competitors, other NGOs (Vestergaard, Humanitarian Appeal and the Paradox of Power, 2013).

Furthermore, according to Chouliaraki (2010), the post-humanitarian sensibility emerges as a reaction to the intertwining of politics and humanitarianism which causes an appeal to morality and emotion, as well as a response of the participation of humanitarian organizations in the global competitive market for media attention.

A new feature that was introduced in this phase that differs from the previous stages, are values such as accountability and transparency that NGOs incorporated into their codes of conduct. Hence, strengthening the brand image by adding values that the organization feels in line with, a vision and a mission (Chouliaraki, 'Improper distance': Towards a critical account of solidarity as irony, 2011) (Orgad, 2013). In this regard, the internet served as a platform to expand their messages, improve the communication, and attempt to reach at a broader public in a way that was not possible with the previous means.

In addition, another characteristic that was central to this stage was a shift in the focus of the agent of the communication. We experience a rediscovered focus on the organization itself instead of in the receiver of the aid. This strategy attempts to strengthen the link that the donor might feel towards the organization and build up loyalty. This phase, through the use of extensive marketing techniques, seeks the engagement of the public in playful consumerism (Chouliaraki, Post-humanitarianism. Humanitarian communication beyond a politics of pity, 2010) (Orgad, 2013).

Moreover, the third central characteristic of this phase is the involvement of celebrities into the communication of the NGOs, or celebrity activism. By doing so, the public perceives the values and ideas that the celebrity, or ambassador, represents and associates them with the brand (Chouliaraki, 'Improper distance': Towards a critical account of solidarity as irony, 2011). This strategy will attract potential donors that would normally not be interested in the doings of the NGO due to the involvement of the people they admire.

As mentioned before, all the previous strategies were adopted in this phase as a consequence of the increase competitiveness in the for the media and Western public (Chouliaraki, 'Improper distance': Towards a critical account of solidarity as irony, 2011). This is specially relevant if we consider the media attention as a zero-sum game, where the coverage that you can receive in the media is limited and conditioned by all the other topics being covered.

Nonetheless, one of the main criticisms that this stage has received is related to the lack of involvement and representations from those affected as well as oversimplifying the solution to the problems of poverty and development or the work carried out by the organizations (Chouliaraki, ‘Improper distance’: Towards a critical account of solidarity as irony, 2011). Finally, the gap between “us” and “them” is still very present in this stage and still needs to be addressed.

As it has been observed, NGOs are constantly dealing with a set of challenges. Nowadays, they are struggling to find the balance between sharing accurate and objective information about crises and the precarious situation people all over the world are living in, and trying to achieve as many donors as possible at the expense of ignoring the perspectives of the people affected. Therefore, as will be studied in section 6, the competition that the internet has created for media attention, has led to an increase in the use of strategies such as shock effect with highly emotional factors in order to attract a larger number of donors.

3.3 NGO communication problems nowadays

Moving on, whether we are currently in the post-humanitarian sensibility era, or moving forward to a new one, there are certain challenges that are unique to the present moment as a consequence of the predominant presence of the internet as a channel of communication, the attention it receives, and the modern emphasis given to values and good practices. These challenges will be explored through the project, as a base for explaining the choices behind the communication strategies chosen by organizations.

3.3.1. Competition for media attention

Nowadays NGOs have more means than ever to raise awareness and to reach a broader audience more effectively, thanks to the emergence of new communication systems and platforms provided by the internet such as social media. Nonetheless, we can find contrasted perspectives among the scholars in regards to the implications of the use of the internet for communication purposes by NGOs.

On one side, there are some authors that argue that the internet has served as a platform for maximizing the reach of the NGOs efforts, hence being able to generate more awareness

globally (Earl & Kimport, 2011) (Kingston & Stam, 2013). As Shirky (2011) explains “As the communications landscape gets denser, more complex, and more participatory, the networked population is gaining greater access to information, more opportunities to engage in public speech, and an enhanced ability to undertake collective action.”

On the other side, there are some authors that argue that the studies should not focus on the characteristics and potential of the new technologies, and that in the contrary, the internet exacerbates a bigger problem that is not solved through the use of these platforms, this is the scarcity of attention (Thrall, Stecula, & Sweet, 2014). According to the authors, attention is a zero-sum equation where NGOs compete for public and media attention, therefore, for one organization to gain attention, other must lose it (Thrall, Stecula, & Sweet, 2014). This is a problem not solved by the appearance of the internet as the internet served as a platform for a vast number of organizations to communicate and look for attention, while this exceeds the capacity that the public has to perceive said attention.

In their work, Keck and Sikkink (1998) argue that politics are a central element in the development of the work of NGOs as they are reliant on it for visibility. Furthermore, traditionally, NGOs have been reliant on the media to extend their influence through governments, public opinion and ultimately change the political reality, however, nowadays the reliance has shift towards information politics (Cottle, 2008).

Therefore, the problems presented to NGOs in the pursue of media attention, can be gathered into three main groups. In first place, the competition between organizations is exponentially growing, but in addition, they must not only compete amongst themselves for attention, but also against other newsworthy pieces. In second place, there is an added challenge presented by the fact that developing countries experience a reduced media coverage in comparison with western countries (Wu, 2000) (Thrall, Stecula, & Sweet, 2014). In third place, not only the global south receives less attention in the media, but also human rights groups specifically are also subjected to a limited attention (Thrall, Stecula, & Sweet, 2014).

3.3.2. Competition for public's attention on the Internet

Furthermore, in relation to the attention that the public can dedicate to NGOs presents a similar problem as the one perceived in regards to media attention, a limited amount of attention by each individuals zero-sum. Thrall, Stecula and Sweet (2014) argue that attention is a scarce

resource, hence, the level of attention that can be paid to a specific issue or organization is fixed. Therefore, information politics will be limited to a small number of organizations that hold the media and public's attention.

In addition, there are some issues presented that are particular to the communication with the public. The communication platforms for the media differs from those for the public, being the latest oriented towards social media communication. Nonetheless, in the last years we have experienced a diversification of platforms, adding a difficulty to the task of communication and requiring more resources. As Hindman (2008) puts it, while the introduction of the internet has signified a decrease in the costs of communication, it has not done so in relation to the production of information that the public would want to consume, specially in comparison with your competitors. Furthermore, there is an uneven distribution in regards to the consumption of the public, where a few organizations hold the majority of the attention (Hindman, 2008).

In order to resolve the previous problems regarding the minimized attention that non-governmental organizations receive, NGOs should allocate a greater investment into the media attention, this will allow them to increase their technical capabilities and through the use of better resources and an increase in the communications personnel, increase the attention they receive. Notwithstanding, this conduces us to the third major problem of NGOs communications nowadays; the lack of resources into communication.

3.3.3. Lack of resources in communication

Moving on, NGOs have systematically presented an underfunding into communication resources. This is due to several reasons. NGOs are reliant on the donations of the community, hence, investing into other aspects of the organizations other than the projects developed can be perceived as overhead costs, as frequently would mean reducing the expenditure in the current project (Maiers, Reynolds, & Haselkorn, 2005). Hence, long term investments such as those in communication programs and systems are affected, hindering the construction of communication infrastructures. "Where donor funding goes beyond basic needs, it is generally allocated towards tangible infrastructure projects, such as the restoration and building of schools and hospitals, without complimentary financing for the long-term administrative and strategic support of these facilities." (Maiers, Reynolds, & Haselkorn, 2005).

3.3.4. Ethical challenges

In the last decades, a term that has been contested in the humanitarian ethical communication is that of accountability. This concept has been defined by Edwards and Hulme (1995) as “the means by which individuals and organizations report to a recognized authority, or authorities, and are held responsible for their actions”.

While accountability in relation to responsibility of action towards the public and the environment is highly studied in corporations, in the humanitarian field is a term that remains understudied. In the complex network in which NGOs operate, often in coordination with other NGOs, it is hard to pinpoint for accountability in the necessary case. We understand accountability in regards to what has been done, what projects implemented and mainly, the results of these into the population, but not only the impact on the aided population, as well the accountability towards the donors and other stakeholders (Davison, 2007). What differs in NGO accountability in relation to corporate accountability is the introduction of concepts such as ethics and moral, which make the tracking process harder, as it is qualitative. Accountability in the terms of the images shared is also important (Davison, 2007).

As a consequence of a lack of consensus and a unified definition, there is ambiguity in relation to which aspects should be covered under the term of accountability as a humanitarian practice. In the Overseas Development Index, they differentiated from three different types of accountability to which NGOs can hold. In first place, it can be “rights-based”, which defends the participation of affected populations into the creation and implementation of the programs. In second place, accountability was also perceived as having an ethical and moral component, where organizations had to make themselves accountable in the case of any moral breach. For this purpose, many organizations created their own codes of conduct to which they would stand and be loyal to. In third place, this category is understood as accountability as something qualitative, hence, you would be made accountable if your targets were not reached according to your own performance indicators (Knox-Clarke & Mitchell, 2011). Nonetheless, the authors argue how achieving a balance between the three is very hard as it involves a great number of resources and rigor (Knox-Clarke & Mitchell, 2011).

Furthermore, in relation to the agents of the accountability, the analysis in NGOs presents an asymmetrical relation between the named “downward accountability”, this is the one that is directed towards the receivers of the aid, in comparison with the “upwards accountability”, the one directed at the donor community (Arroyo, 2014).

4. Research goals and questions

The primary goal of this project is to study whether there is a correlation between the external communication campaign that an NGO uses and their performance. The secondary goal is to analyze in depth what aspects of the campaign are more effective in achieving a better performance.

Therefore, based on the primary and secondary goal of the project, the research question that is going to be answered in this project is **Does the communication strategy of NGOs have an impact on their performance?** In addition, there are two elements that require further elaboration. On one side, the performance of the NGOs is going to be assessed based on three indicators. The metrics used in this study are demonstrable impact of communication campaign on fundraising, easiness to create new partnerships and number of new members subscribed. On the other side, the communication strategy used is going to be analyzed considering three factors, namely the communication strategy, the amount invested into fundraising and the presence of the campaign in different platforms. Considering all these different factors and cross-analyzing them it will be possible to dilucidated the research question with certain precision.

Moreover, the hypothesis with which analysis starts are

Hypothesis 1: There is a correlation between the amount invested in communication and the fundraising.

Hypothesis 2: The more money it is invested in communication, the more funds the NGOs will receive.

Hypothesis 3: The more extensive through different media the campaign is, the more members the NGOs will receive.

Hypothesis 4: The strategy used in the campaign will not have a significant impact on the performance of the organization.

Hypothesis 5: The more extensive a campaign is, the easier it will be for NGOs to create new partnerships.

5. Methodology

In order to carry out the research in this project, the following methodology is going to be used. Firstly, the center of the analysis is going to be a comparative study of three external communication campaigns of three different NGOs. These are Doctors Without Borders, Vicente Ferrer Foundation and Action Against Hunger. The campaigns analyzed are going to be national campaigns that use a variety of channels to communicate their message, therefore, these campaigns will be aimed at reaching a broader public. The timeframe used is going to be from 2016 to 2020. This is because the organizations last financial data available is that of 2020. Besides, the period studied is going to be extended to the five previous years in order to maximize the data studied and reach more accurate conclusions. It also enables to study the evolution of the strategies and fundraising through time.

Moreover, the method employed in the study is an inductive method. This is because particular cases are going to be analyzed and the results achieved are going to be used to extract conclusions that can be applied and might be valid for other cases that have not been studied in the present project. Therefore, through observation and experimentation we achieve to reach generalizations that might be consecutively repeated. In this case, the conclusions extracted by studying the cases of Doctors Without Borders, Vicente Ferrer Foundation and Action Against Hunger, could be applied to other NGOs of similar characteristics.

Furthermore, regarding the nature of the data, the study is going to follow qualitative and quantitative techniques in order to extend the reach of the analysis. On one hand, regarding the quantitative techniques we are going to analyze the type of message used in the campaigns according to the techniques that were explained in the state-of-the-art section. 200 aleatory social media posts over the years 2016 to 2020 will be studied and classified into the three different communicational strategies. Thus, 40 post per year per organization will be analyzed, making it a total of 600 posts studied. This will enable to quantify and study the most commonly used tone of the organizations. Social media has been chosen to study the organization's communication because it is the main platform in which organizations most frequently communicate with the broader public.

In addition, with the objective of studying the impact on fundraising, a documentary analysis will be used, recurring to data provided in the annual memories of the organizations as well as external financial audits, which includes the financial statements of the NGOs.

On the other hand, the qualitative techniques are going to be supported with structured interviews with one members of the communication team of the three NGOs, this will provide an inside perspective into the analysis. To develop the quantitative side of the investigation, Likert scales will be used during the interviews, this will help to quantify some of the data provided. Besides, the data will be organized in a descriptive way through charts and graphics.

Besides, regarding the time frame this project will follow a synchronous analysis as it is going to observe the case study in a short time frame, that is five years.

In addition, looking into the chronological dimension of the project, it is going to follow a descriptive approach. Therefore, the study phenomenon will be described as they occur in reality in a crossed analysis, where the cases will be studied using the same variable for all of them and only one study will be made per organization.

Concerning the sources, a methodological approach will be used where through the use of the primary and secondary sources we will measure, collect and analyze the data.

6. Analysis and discussion

With the objective of assessing the three indicators that showcase the performance of the organization, this section is going to be divided into three sections that address each of the indicators. Firstly, the relation between the investment that the organization has made into fundraising and the funds actually raised will observe the first performance indicator of the amount of funds raised. Secondly, the types of communicational strategy that the organizations have used, will intend to find patterns between the funds raised, the partners made and the communicational strategy. Finally, the number of new partners and members will be studied to illustrate the third performance indicator in relation to the partnerships. Moreover, this section is going to start by making a profile of the organizations of study to provide some context for rest of the analysis.

6.1 Profile of the organizations

6.1.1 Doctors Without Borders

Doctors Without Borders (DWB), is a non-governmental organization centered in the humanitarian and medical action, they assist people threatened by armed conflict, violence, epidemics, diseases, natural disasters and people under exclusion of medical attention (Doctors Without Borders, 2022). They are an independent organization and do not rely on governments for their survival, in the same way, their objective is people focus, thus their interventions are not extended over time because their objective is not aiding countries or governments overall (Doctors Without Borders, 2022). In order to guarantee this objective, the majority of the funds received by DWB come from private donations and collaborations. In 2020, 97,2% of their global income came from a private origin, whereas the rest came from governments and public humanitarian agencies (Doctors Without Borders, 2020).

DWB is an extensive organization with a permanent office in 23 countries, however, their actuation is not limited to those and they carry out operations worldwide. One of said permanent offices is located in Spain. Regarding their communication efforts in Spain, they develop campaigns in social media and in street advertisement. In terms of fundraising, DWB is the biggest of the organizations studied.

6.1.2 Vicente Ferrer Foundation

Vicente Ferrer Foundation (VFF) is a Spanish organization centered around carrying out development projects in the south of India since 1969, therefore their intervention areas are very limited. In relation to the communication efforts, VFF has a strong presence in-street advertisement in the major cities in Spain. In addition, their social media are very active as well. Regarding their funds raised, VFF receives the majority of their funds from private origins, 94% in 2021 (Vicente Ferrer Foundation, 2021). VFF is the smaller of the organizations studied in this project in terms of funds.

6.1.3 Action Against Hunger

Action Against Hunger (AAH) is an organization whose primary objective is the eradication of poverty and hunger, they carry out interventions worldwide. From the group of organizations studied AAH presents a particularity in relation to the others. Regarding the fundraising efforts in Spain, the vast majority of the money raised each year comes from public funds (98,5% in 2020) (Action Against Hunger, 2020), this differs significantly from the other organizations of study, who receive their 80% to 90% of their funds from private donations (Doctors Without Borders, 2020) (Vicente Ferrer Foundation, 2021). This difference implies that the organization has less independence when deciding in which projects they want to invest comparatively with the other organizations of study.

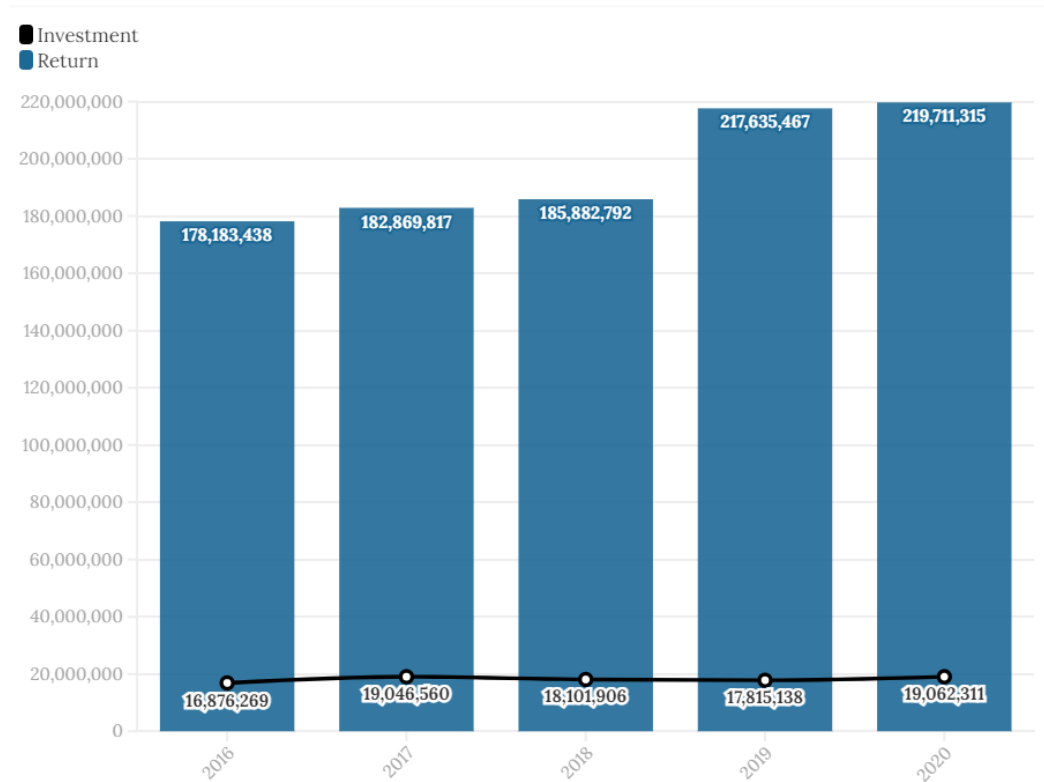
6.2 Investment-Return Ratio

In this section, the relation between the investment in communication and fundraising and the total return will be analyzed in order to determine whether there is a correlation between the money invested in communication and the total amount raised.

Firstly, it is important to remark that when reference is made to “money invested in fundraising” this consists in all sorts of communication efforts remarkably, all the money invested into attracting new partners and donors through different channels to the organization. These include money invested in external campaigns, collaboration with brand ambassadors, other tools to increase the online presence such as google ads and Facebook ads, SEM and SEO tools, call centers, advertisements in press, television and radio, etc.

Similarly, when reference is made to communication, it is specifically external communication directed towards increasing the brand exposure, increasing the number of new members and partners, and to introduce the organization to new publics.

Graph 1: Relation between the amount of money invested in fundraising and the total money raised in Doctors Without Borders Spain in € (2016-2020)



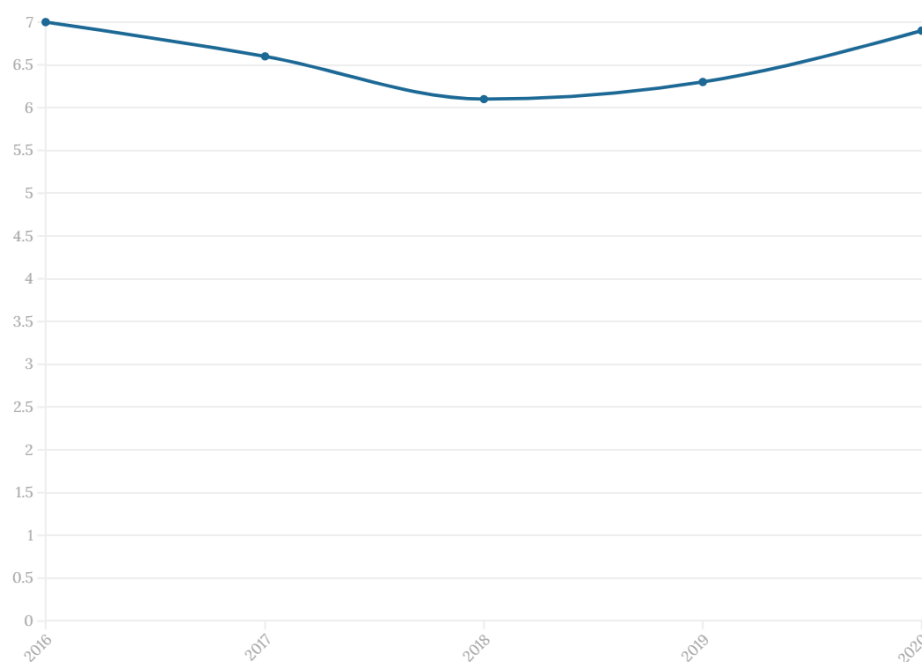
Graph of own elaboration, data retrieved from the Annual Memories of DWB in the years 2016 to 2020.

In this chart we can appreciate the relation between the money invested in fundraising (in black) with the total money raised per year in Doctors Without Borders in Spain (in blue). As it can be observed, in DWB the amount invested into the fundraising efforts varies quite remarkably over the last five years, however, the money raised is exponentially growing. In appearance, it seems that regardless of the money invested, there is an exponential growth. For instance, in 2017, 19,046,560€ were invested into the fundraising efforts with a total return of 182,869,817€, however, in 2020, the year with a highest investment, only 15,751 more euros were invested, while the return did not reflect such difference proportionally, having a 20% higher return. In a similar manner, 2016 was the year with the lowest investment,

notwithstanding, comparatively with the following year, 2,170,291 less euros were invested in 2016 than 2017, only obtaining a 3% higher return in 2017.

This difference in fundraising could be explained by the fact, that through these communications efforts, each year the organization is more known to the public, making it easier to raise funds, hence, the underlying message is that the communication efforts are being successful as the organization is seeing higher returns per euro invested in fundraising. This argument will be further analyzed in the campaigns, in order to determine more factors that can contribute to sustaining the argument.

Graph 2: Return per euro invested in fundraising in DWB in Spain (2016-2020)

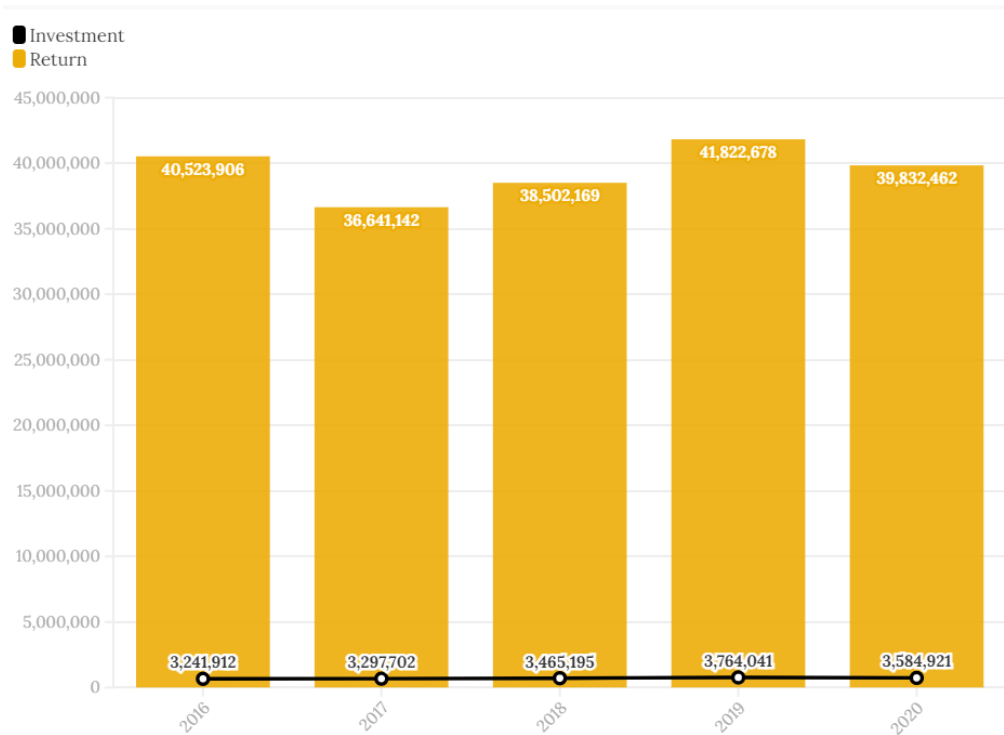


Graph of own elaboration, data retrieved from the Annual Memories of DWB in the years 2016 to 2020

As it can be appreciated in the graph, the return per euro invested in fundraising in Spain, suffered a downturn in from 2016 to 2018 and since then its making a comeback, meaning that DWB is more successfully investing the funds they receive.

Moreover, DWB receives the vast majority of their funds from private investors (98.5% in 2020) (Doctors Without Borders, 2020), this is the individuals that make a single donation to the organization (donors) or individuals who make a stable periodic donation (members), in addition to enterprises. Therefore, the greater number of members an organization has, the more stable the income would be.

Graph 3: Relation between the amount of money invested in fundraising and the total money raised in Vicente Ferrer Foundation in € (2016-2020)

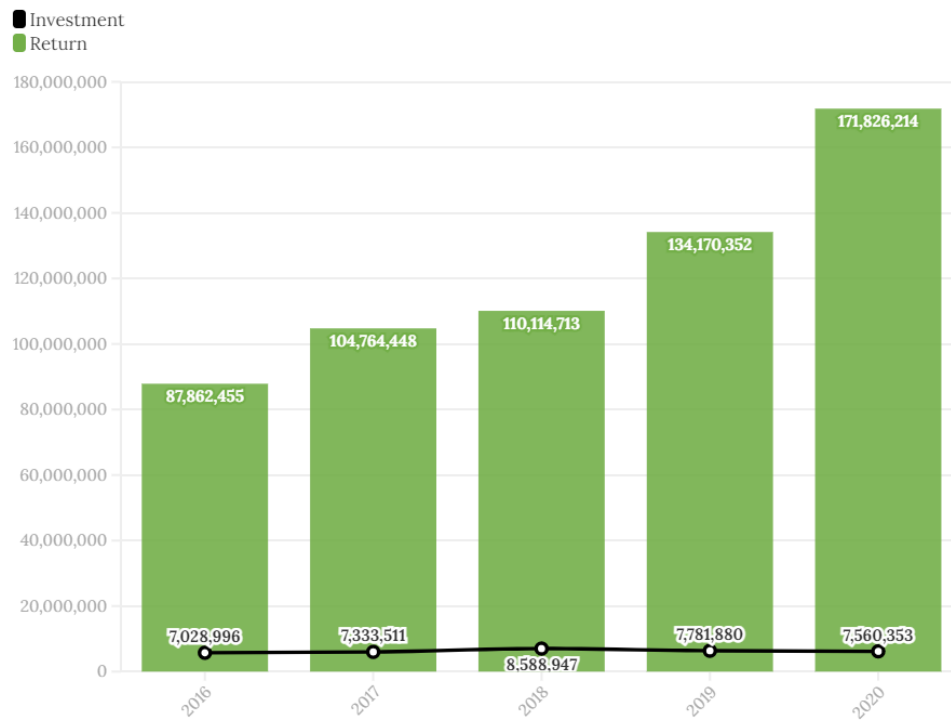


Graph of own elaboration, data retrieved from the Annual Memories of VFF in the years 2016 to 2020

The Vicente Ferrer Foundation has a fairly stable investment in fundraising. The strategy that the organization has opted to in regards to the expenditure in fundraising is to have a consistent investment of the 9% of the total funds into fundraising, therefore, we can appreciate that there are no major variations, as the money invested is always proportional to the money raised. However, an exception can be noted in 2016, this year shows the lowest investment into fundraising, however, it is the second highest return year.

In addition, it is important to note that VFF is the only of the organizations studied that does not have an exponential increase in the total amount raised through the years, instead, the amount raised fluctuates, as does the investment.

Graph 4: Relation between the amount of money invested in fundraising and the total money raised in Action Against Hunger in € (2016-2020)



Graph of own elaboration, data retrieved from the Annual Memories of AAH in the years 2016 to 2020

Action Against Hunger has a particularity of its own. We can appreciate that whilst the amount invested into fundraising remains somewhat stable with no major fluctuations, the money raised is exponentially growing. If a comparison is drawn between the year 2016, where the least money was raised and 2020, the year with a highest return, it can be appreciated that the efforts put into fundraising only differ by a 7% more in 2020 while the amount raised reaches the 195% more in 2020 than 2016.

Besides, AAH differs from the other organizations of study because it is the only one to draw the great majority of their funds from public sources (86% in 2020), this includes governments, public administrations, international organizations, international agencies, etc. (Action Against Hunger, 2020). Among the benefits of receiving funds from public sources is that these agencies make big donations, however a major drawback is that the organization does not have full independence in the allocation of these funds into different projects. Public aid is often conditioned to a specific project or cause.

Additionally, if we analyze the answers from the interviewees in regards to fundraising we can appreciate that when asked about the relation between the investment in communication and the total amount raised, the totality of the interviewees replied that there was a correlation. Moreover, when they were asked whether there was a correlation between a greater communicational effort and the funds raised, the three of them replied that there was, making special emphasis to the importance of social media to promote your brand from your content published or through the use of tools such as Facebook adds to promote the awareness of the brand. These are factors that contribute greatly to the top-of-mind knowledge of the brands, thus, when a donor is intercepted through any of the fundraising channels (face-to-face, call centers, etc.), the person will already have knowledge of the brand and of the main activities of the organization, making them more prone to become donors or members.

Furthermore, if we draw a comparison among the different organizations we can appreciate that while there is not a direct correlation between the amount invested into fundraising, a general rule can be drawn out in which this premise is true, yet there are significant exceptions to this rule. This illustrates how there are other factors involved in the determination of the money raised other than the amount invested into said fundraising, such as determining in what specifically has the funds been invested, the communication campaigns or the channels used. Therefore, in the following section, the communication campaigns employed by the organizations, as well as their tone is going to be analyzed to illustrate other factors that might influence in the success of the organization.

6.3 Types of campaigns used

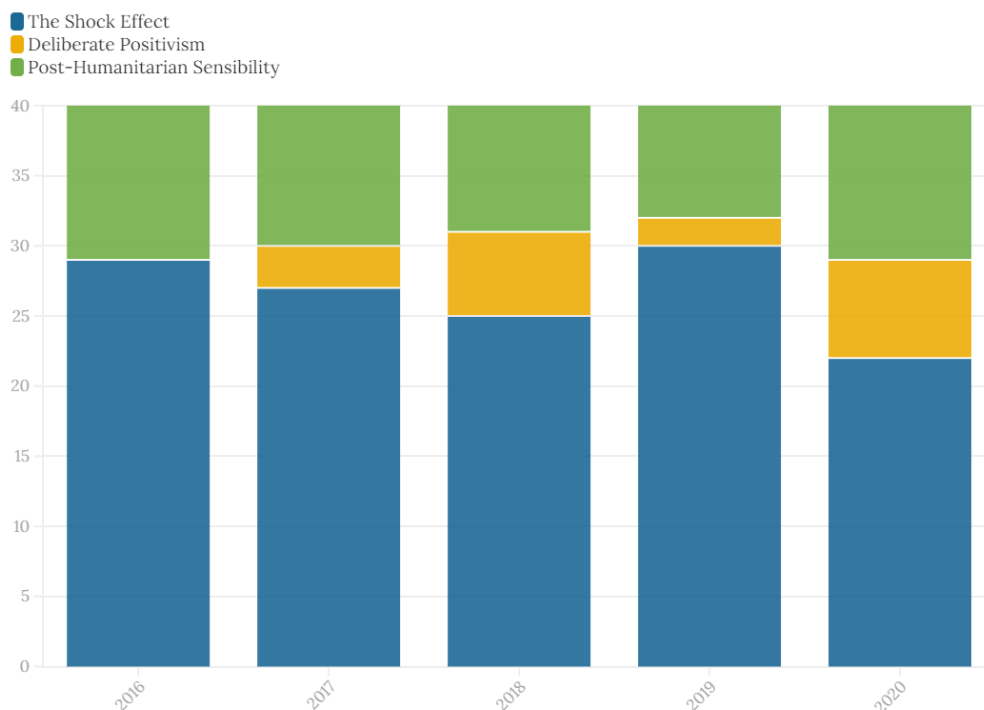
The type of campaign used in the fundraising efforts can have a significant impact on the amount raised. When the interviewees were asked what the main objective of their communication was, the interviewee from AAH mentioned that while both, building brand awareness and fundraising, were important, more emphasis was set on the fundraising efforts, as the objective of any organization is to achieve economic independence. Moreover, the interviewee from VFF acknowledged that while fundraising and brand awareness are both important, they focus on building the fundraising through the spread of brand awareness, therefore, their campaigns are focused on making their brand reach as many people as possible, and through that knowledge, obtain funds as well, under the premise that if people are familiarized with your brand, it will be more likely to receive funds from them. In addition, the

interviewee from DWB established that due to the wide spread of the organization in multiple countries, fundraising tends to be their priority, as the brand is well known.

Moreover, in relation to the channels used, it can be observed that the three organizations are highly consistent with the use of social media and have a presence in a variety of them. They all have an account in Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn, with the exception of DWB Spain, who does not have an account on LinkedIn.

Additionally, in order to determine the types of campaigns and rhetoric used by the organizations, 200 random posts per organization, 40 each year, from the most active social media (namely Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube) in the timeframe of 5 years (2016-2020), will be analyzed. The objective is to disseminate the posts to determine which trends they fit better into according to the categories studied in section 3; *The Shock Effect (SE)*, *Deliberate Positivism (DP)* and *Post-Humanitarian Sensibility (PHS)*, and observe if there are any trends in the messages used.

Graph 5. Type of strategy used in social media in Doctors Without Borders (2016-2020)



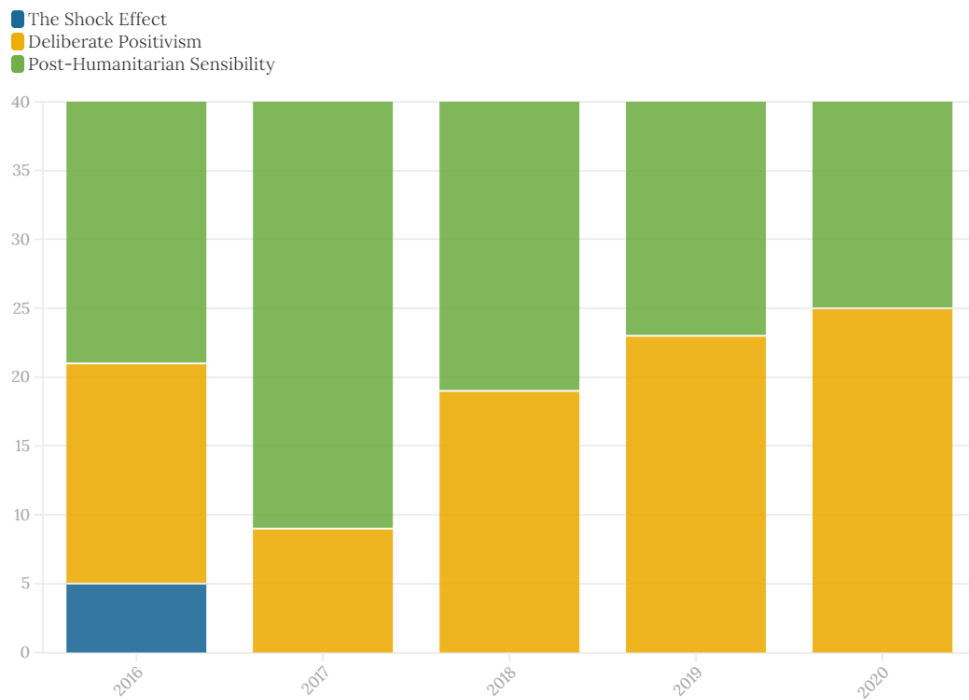
Graph of own elaboration

In first place, in the case of Doctors Without Borders it can be appreciated that the strategy more predominantly used through the years is The Shock Effect, amounting up to the 66.5% of the 200 posts analyzed.

Furthermore, regarding the possible ethical challenges that using the Shock Effect as a primary strategy has, DWB communication through social media apply the SE through the use of impacting figures that aim at causing shock and images in the aftermath of a natural disaster, armed conflict or humanitarian crisis. Even though most of their messages do not share the personal story or image of people directly, their messages are highly emotional and generally, very negative. They tend to portray the victim anonymously and rarely share personal stories of aided people, extrapolating their suffering into a greater group of people. In the instances where they do share individual stories of people, they tend to be negative, therefore fitting into the category of SE, even if they are not anonymous.

This strategy aligns with the objectives of the organizations as it can be extracted from the interviews. DWB acts as a relief effort in situations of humanitarian emergency, however they do not work in long-term development projects. Thus, the strategy of the Shock Effect causes a greater impact on the general public, potentially making them donate more as a consequence of the impact of the campaign. In addition, DWB receives the majority of their funds from private sources (individuals) hence, receiving constant and stable funds from them is essential to the success of the project. In addition, as it was mentioned in section 3, the Shock Effect can be successful in shifting the balance of the competitiveness for the public's attention on the internet and social media, as more impactful images and messages, attracts more the attention of the public by targeting the emotions and empathy of the audience.

Graph 6. Type of strategy used in social media in Vicente Ferrer Foundation (2016-2020)



Graph of own elaboration

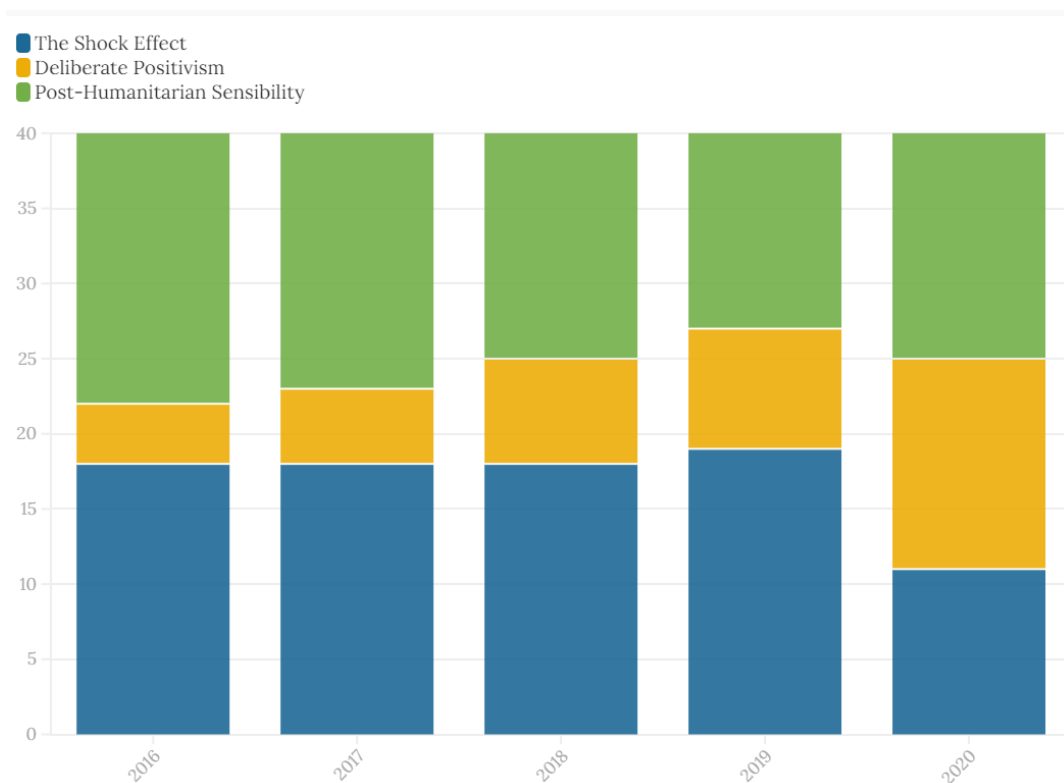
In second place, in the case of Vicente Ferrer Foundation, it can be appreciated how the organization does not make use of the Shock Effect. Instead, all their messages are divided into Deliberate Positivism and Post-Humanitarian Sensibility, except for 5 posts in 2016 that were categorized into SE. Furthermore, a trend can be observed, where in 2016 PHS was the type of post more prominently used with 19 posts in 2016, closely followed by DP with 16 posts. Nonetheless, the trend has been inverted. In 2020 DP was the main trend with the 62.5% of the posts, the rest of them belonging to PHS. Therefore, a trend can be observed where VFF is directing towards a more prominent use of Deliberate Positivism as their main strategy.

What we can extract from these data is that Vicente Ferrer Foundation in 2016 focused their communication on social media on Post-Humanitarian Sensibility characteristics such as a main focus on the organization, their values and the people working in it and the voluntary workers, however, there were few stories of the beneficiaries of the aid. In addition, it can be observed how in the early years the organization, VFF engaged the audience in playful consumerism by promoting benefic products in social media and making collaborations with celebrities, such as the 2018 partnership with Rafa Nadal. However, in 2020, the Deliberate Positivism trend was more prominent. In this year, the organization centered their communication in portraying the achievement of the organization and the impact of the aid.

VFF often tells the story of the people involved and always a very positive tone and message. Nonetheless, VFF still maintains a balance with showing the values of the organization such as sustainability and inclusion and make a moderate use of campaigns with celebrities.

From this analysis a conclusion could be drawn. This positive and stable communication strategy could be associated with the stable fundraising. As VFF does not use high impact images and messages in their communication, a higher shock with the public might be harder to achieve, instead, VFF tries to achieve the empathy of the audience from a positive light and specially by portraying the advancements that the organization makes. From a negative perspective, this strategy might make it harder to compete for the public's attention in social media. From a positive perspective, the dignity of the beneficiary is always respected and shows the beneficiary as resilient and grateful, instead of pitiful or hopeless. This conclusion is supported by the interview to the VFF member, who stated that a primary objective of VFF is to maintain the dignity of the people they aid, thus they try to make their campaigns as accurate to the reality as possible.

Graph 7. Type of strategy used in social media in Action Against Hunger (2016-2020)



Graph of own elaboration

In third place, Action Against Hunger is the organization that recurs more to the use of the image of celebrities and famous people in their social media campaigns, thus, the use of PHS is high and somewhat stable through the years. Some instances of the use of these types of campaigns are the philanthropic concert “Lucha de Gigantes” and collaboration with restaurants across Spain in “Restaurantes contra el hambre”. These campaigns are highly promoted and repeated in the social media posts. Nonetheless, the strategy most used by AAH in the period studied is the Shock Effect. AAH often recurs to sharing personal stories of the victims. In this communication, the victim does not remain nameless, however, these post could not fit into the DP category, even though they share some characteristics of this group, because the story of the victim is always portrayed in a negative manner, almost hopeless. In addition, in relation to the ethical challenges of the Shock Effect, they still make a conscious effort to maintain the dignity of the person by not sharing images of their suffering directly, instead, the person shares their story, but they do not make use of impacting images that might be harmful to their dignity, in this way, they try to avoid ethical challenges that might influence the image of the organization. In the long term, this might influence the organization’s ability to raise funds as the public can deem them as unethical.

In relation to the interview carried out with AAH, the interviewee stated that there was a direct correlation between the use of celebrities in the campaigns and the funds raised, when was asked about the most successful campaign strategy for fundraising. The interviewee from AAH argued how using celebrities provides great exposure to the message and the organization, due to the great number of followers that these people have in their accounts. In addition, the audience might be influenced to donate to the organization if the celebrity they follow shares the values and importance of donating. Moreover, in the interview, the manager of the communication and fundraising department of AAH, mentioned the effectiveness of using sentimentalism to generate an impact. He argued how sentimental messages catches the attention of people and how the public needs a trigger to become a member through a sensitive campaign and in line with the organization’s brand. As we can appreciate, the messages extracted from the interview align with the conclusions extracted from the analysis of the data.

Furthermore, it can be observed how DWB and AAH make an extensive use of the Shock Effect by sharing impacting images and stories of the recipients of aid, while VFF is centered in sharing the stories of success and resilience. Besides, in relation to the funds raised DWB and AAH have experienced in the last few years an exponential increase of the funds raised, being the use of the SE the major difference in the campaigns with VFF, it can be argued that

this might be a factor to explain the disparities in the funds raised. Nonetheless, the SE has to be used mindfully in order to avoid commercializing the suffering of people.

As it can be appreciated from comparing the communication strategies of the different organizations, strategies characterized of the 1970s are still widely used nowadays. Nonetheless, organizations are more concerned and aware of the ethical challenges and maintaining the dignity of the beneficiary, so even if an organization uses the Shock Effect as main strategy, they do so by respecting the victims of suffering and the receivers of aid. Therefore, it could be theorized that we are moving towards a new phase of NGO communication, where the Shock Effect is rediscovered and reinvented, but where the organizations are lawful to their codes of conduct and respect for the beneficiary. In this new communication strategy, organizations seek to gain attention from the public in the zero-sum game by making them empathize with the beneficiary by sharing their story, however, portraying them as hopeless, in wait for the aid of the donor. As the crisis in which organization works need the aid imminently, they pursue the greater shock from a respectful approach.

In addition, a new trend of playful donations can also be experienced. In this trend, the organizations explores the creative ways of gaining donations from the audience, examples of these are charitable concerts, solidary merchandise, and events with the participation of celebrities. These trend could be highly effective in gaining attention form the media, as these multitudinous events would gain media coverage.

Thus, while there are some communicational trends that are maintained, overall the communication in NGOs is evolving and seeking to solve some of the main challenges that NGOs face nowadays.

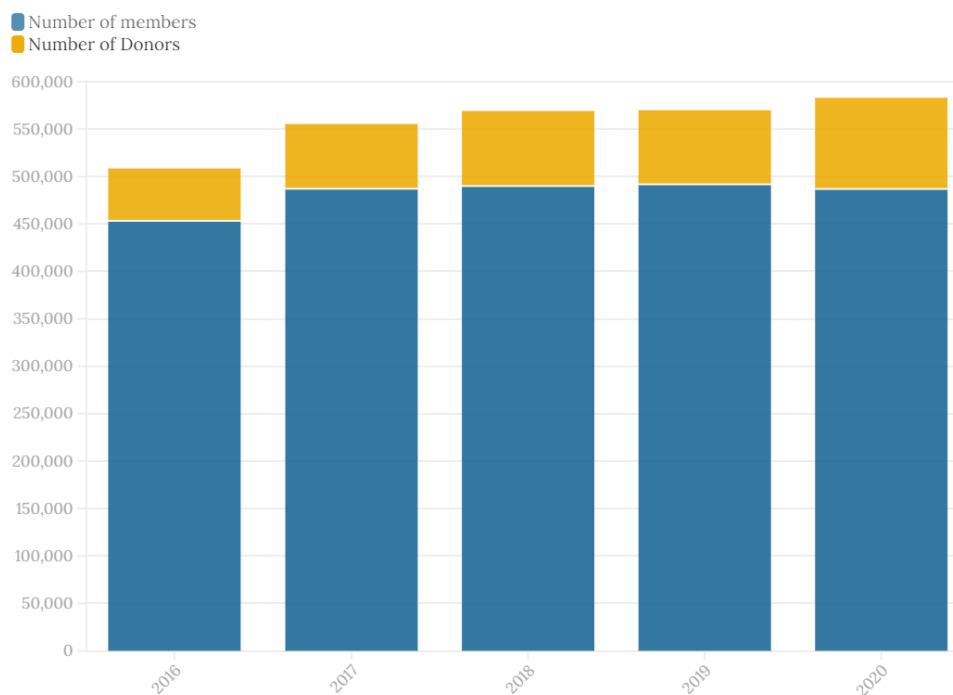
6.4 Easiness to attract partnerships and members

Finally, in this section it is studied whether the communication campaign of the organization has an impact on the easiness to create new partnerships and attract new members. The number of new members is an essential metric to measure the success of a non-governmental organization, this is because the members of an organization are those individuals who periodically make a contribution to the organization, this can be monthly or yearly. Nonetheless, these are stable funds that the organization knows they can count with, and which

are not tied to any specific project or initiative, they are of free disposition. These types of funds are essential for NGOs as it provides them with stability and freedom.

In regards to the number of new partners, while they imply less freedom than private funds, they often provide greater investments in a single round. Having a great number of partners means that the organization is well known and their work is backed by well established international organizations, institutions, or governments.

Graph 8. Number of members and donors per year in Doctors Without Borders Spain (2016-2020)

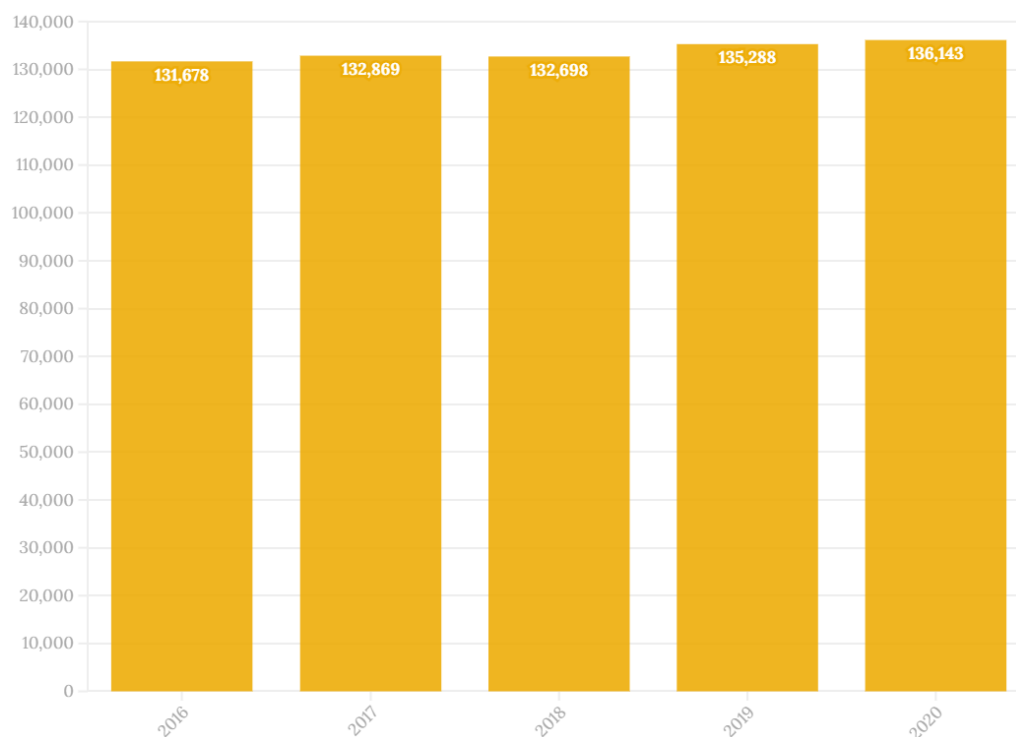


Graph of own elaboration, data retrieved from the Annual Memories of DWB in the years 2016 to 2020

By observing the number of new members in DWB Spain in the last five years, it can be noted that there has not been a great variation. In addition, the communication strategy in Doctors Without Borders has also been very consistent. Hence, no conclusion can be extracted on whether the communication strategy has influenced the number of new members. Nonetheless, the number of single-time donors has increased over the years. This could indicate how the communication strategy is effective in maintaining their current members, however not as much in attracting new ones. Yet, the SE strategy is successfully attracting one-time donors. This is particularly evident considering that high impact images can lead donors to empathize with a particular crisis or cause and make single donations to the causes that they align with.

Furthermore, in relation to the number of partners, DWB mainly receives their funding from private sources, only the 1,5% of the funds in 2020 came from public sources (Doctors Without Borders, 2020). Therefore, in the case of DWB studying the number of new partners is not relevant, as they mainly rely on the contribution of the members and donors. Besides, it is important to note how the number of donors is also proportional to the increase of the funds raised.

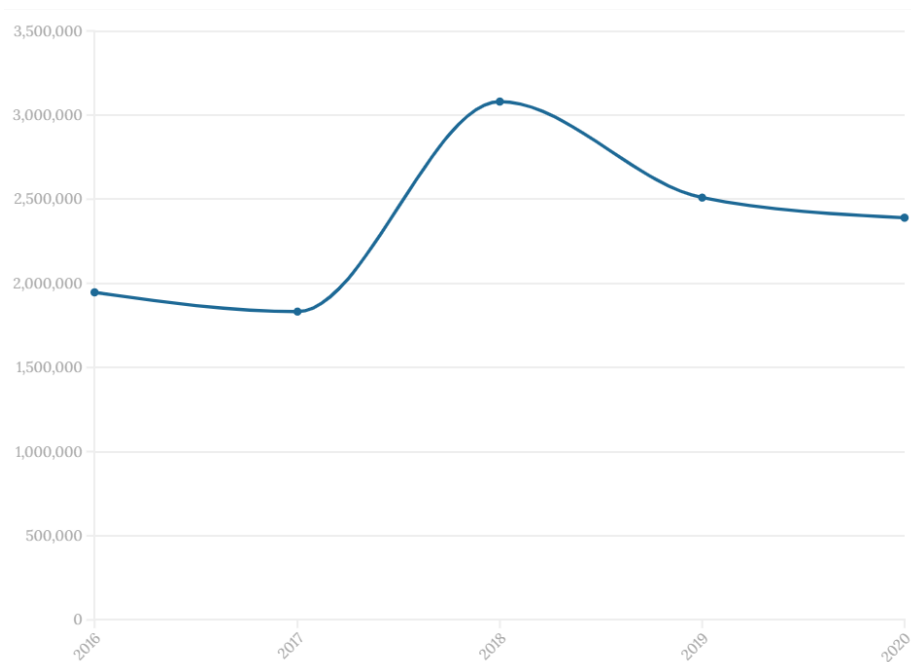
Graph 9. Number of collaborators of Vicente Ferrer Foundation by year (2016-2020)



Graph of own elaboration, data retrieved from the Annual Memories of VFF in the years 2016 to 2020

Vicente Ferrer Foundation does not represent their number of donors and members separately, thus in graph 9 we can observe the total number of collaborators per year, combining both the donors and members. Moreover, it can be noted that there is no significant variation in the figures although there is a slight tendency upwards. Implying that the audience might be reacting positively to the shift to a Deliberate Positivism tendency of the organization.

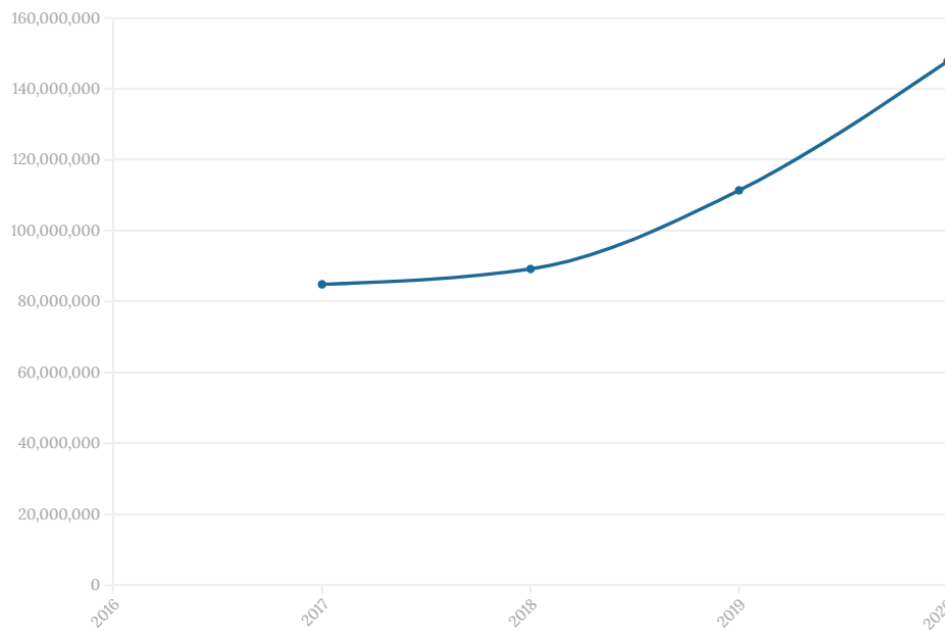
Graph 10. Public funds received by Vicente Ferrer Foundation in € (2016-2020)



Graph of own elaboration, data retrieved from the Annual Memories of VFF in the years 2016 to 2020

Moreover, in relation to the public collaborations, we can appreciate how there are variations, reaching the peak in 2018. Nonetheless, no correlation can be observed with the communicational strategies, indicating that the amount of funds received by public institutions might be related with the external communication of the organization, but with other factors instead that have not been considered in this study. These could be as external factors not involving the communication of the organization, such as the type of crisis that the organization is supporting, political factors, changes in the administrators of the organization, changes in other organizations in the sector that might have led to public donors favoring VFF, etc. However, the interviewee from VFF mentioned how being well known is an asset to make more partnerships with public and private entities, implying how communication can be indirectly related with the number of new partnership.

Graph 11. Public funds received by Action Against Hunger in € (2017-2020)



Graph of own elaboration, data retrieved from the Annual Memories of AAH in the years 2016 to 2020

Action Against Hunger receives the majority of their funds from public sources, therefore, in this case it is more relevant to study the public partnerships variations. As it can be noted from graph 11, the amount of money received from public sources has been exponentially growing overtime, going from 81% of their total funds raised in 2017, to 86% in 2020 (Action Against Hunger, 2020). The relation between public and private funds for 2016 is not available. Regarding the communication strategies, an increase in the use of deliberate positivism it's a factor that proportionally matches these figures.

Another factor that could explain such increase in the public collaborations, is that overtime, the organization has become more well known, leading to the easement of the creation of new public partnerships. In the interview with the AAH member, when he was asked whether there was a correlation between the communication campaigns and the creation of new partnerships, the interviewee answered that the more visibility an organization has, the easier it will be to establish public partnerships, as the public administration also improves their reputation by aligning with well established organizations with a positive reputation.

Moreover, it is remarkable how AAH is the organization that relies the most on the use of celebrities and events in their campaigns, however, this organization is the one that depends the least on the funds from private donors. Therefore, this strategy to use famous people and

multitudinous events could be centered towards the attainment of these visibility towards public administrations, and not as much the general public.

Finally, when asked about their opinion in regards to the importance of the communication in the effective development of the organization as a whole, interviewees responded that it was “essential” and “very important”. Besides, when asked if there was a correlation between the communication and the success of the funds raised, everyone agreed on its importance. The interviewee of VFF brought up the argument that communicating your brand is what makes people aligns with the organization and their values, while the member of DWB established the importance of communicating the reality of humanitarian crisis which, in turn, makes people aware of the situation in which millions are living in worldwide. This comment sheds some light into the responsibility of NGOs, not only as providers of aid, but as communicators.

7. Conclusion and proposals

The primary goal of this project was to study whether there is a correlation between the external communication campaign that an NGO uses and their performance on fundraising, the partnerships created and the new members subscribed. The secondary goal was to analyze in depth what aspects of the campaign are more effective in achieving a better performance. Moreover, to the research question of *Does the communication strategy of NGOs have an impact on their performance?* We can conclude that the communication strategy does in fact have an impact on the performance of the organization. Three main conclusions can be extracted from this analysis that would illustrate the answer to the research question.

In first place, it has been observed through the analysis and the interviewees that there seems to be a correlation between how well-known an organization is and the fundraising, the number of new partners and members. Thus, communication is essential to improve the metrics studied in this project.

In second place, regarding the communicational strategies, the Shock Effect appears to be the best strategy to achieve a greater number of funds and partnerships as was observed in the sections where the fundraising and the partnerships were studied. Additionally, the two organizations that more extensively made use of the Shock Effect are the ones that receive a greater amount of funds and have more members, donors, and partners.

The third main finding that was observed in this study is how the competitiveness for attention in social media and traditional media, has led NGOs to make a comeback to communication strategies that were abandoned three decades ago. Nonetheless, at the present time the awareness towards the performance and accountability of NGOs, specially directed towards the respect of the beneficiary at an ethical level, has led NGOs to adapt the communication technique, creating a new category. This new communication strategy in which we are directed towards has its focus on the victim again, the organization at the center of the communication is abandoned. The image of the victim and its surrounding is frequently used, however, in this instance the story of the beneficiary is frequently told by themselves. Messages are highly dramatic as a consequence of the dramatism of the real situation, but no exaggeration techniques are used. In addition, impacting figures are often used. The main objective of this new strategy is to shock the audience and to create an impact that could serve as a wakeup call to collaborate with the organization. In addition, this strategy is also effective in attracting a greater audience, as the NGO often act as a communicator of a humanitarian crisis reality in

the field. Strategies such as deliberate positivism are not as effective communicators of the harsh reality.

This new strategy of the Shock Effect Reinvented is particularly used in organizations which area of work is short term emergency humanitarian relief aid immediately after a crisis has occurred such as natural disasters, armed conflict, or people in a protracted state of helplessness.

Moreover due to the fact that the organizations had different characteristic that differentiated them, the conclusions reached in this project can be extrapolated to other organizations with similar characteristics.

Furthermore, regarding the hypothesis proposed for this project, the observations of the study can be compared with the initial hypothesis to determine if they were confirmed or denied.

Hypothesis 1: There is a correlation between the amount invested in communication and the fundraising.

This hypothesis was not confirmed. While there is a general pattern that supports this claim, there are important exception to the rule where this premise is not true. Thus, while it is important to invest money into fundraising, there are other factors that are essential into the determination of the money raised.

Hypothesis 2: The more money it is invested in communication, the more funds the NGOs will receive.

Hypothesis 2 was not confirmed. As explained above there are other important exceptions to this claim that have been observed and need to be taken into account.

Hypothesis 3: The more extensive through different media the campaign is, the more members the NGOs will attract.

In this research it was observed that the three organizations studied had presence in the same number of media, therefore, hypothesis 3 was not confirmed. While the number of new members varies in each organization, they all share the same communication platforms.

Hypothesis 4: The strategy used in the campaign will not have a significant impact on the performance of the organization.

Hypothesis 4 was not confirmed. A tendency has been noted in this research, where the organizations that use more shocking images and messages to appeal to the empathy and emotion of the audience are those organizations that raise the more funds or receive the greater number of new members and partners.

Hypothesis 5: The more extensive a campaign is, the easier it will be for NGOs to create new partnerships.

Hypothesis 5 has not been confirmed. In this study it was observed how in the majority of organizations studied were reliant in private funds, only being Action Against Hunger the organization that had the majority of funds coming from public partnerships. Nonetheless, it was observed how the more popular and well known an organization is, the easier it will be to create partnership, therefore, the causality between the extensiveness of the campaign and the easiness to create partnerships is indirect. The more extensive the campaigns an organization makes are, the more likely they are to be well known and the easier it will be to construct these partnerships.

Moreover, while the hypothesis were not confirmed, the research question is affirmative, this is due to the formulation of the hypothesis, where they are partially true but do not completely match the results attained in the investigation. Thus, all they hypothesis are half-trues. Therefore, the relation between the communicational strategy and the performance of the organization relies on other factors that were not initially considered in the hypothesis such as being well-known to facilitate the creation of new partnerships, creating a greater impact on the audience to attain more donations and successfully investing the money in fundraising to maximize the return of the investment.

Additionally, this project has launched a new theory on non-governmental organization's communication techniques. Thus, further studies could analyze whether the trend has continued in the following years and analyze their implications. Moreover, a more extensive projects that includes more organizations and a greater timeframe could illustrate new trends and communication tendencies in NGOs as well as more repercussions of the communicational choices on the performance. Additionally, lack on data on the investment in each specific campaign has limited the extent of the analysis of this project. A more extensive analysis with more available data could illustrate other factors that might contribute to the fundraising of NGOs that this study might have overlooked.

In conclusion, studies on the implications of communication are often neglected, nonetheless, communication is not only a tool that has the potential to maximize the performance of organizations, but it is also a necessity in the current moment. Every organization has their communication platform that must be able to effectively transmit the project and brand values, as a transparent organization generates a trustworthiness in the audience. Finally, this project intends to illustrate the importance of communication and having a successful communication plan established is the key to success and survival of Non-Governmental Organizations.

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9. Annex

9.1 Template of the questions made in the interviews divided into categories

Generales

Del 1-5, ¿cómo de importante dirías que es la comunicación en el desarrollo efectivo de la organización en su conjunto?

Recaudación de fondos e inversión de los fondos de comunicación.

Del 1-5 ¿cómo de importante es la comunicación para el éxito de la recaudación de fondos?

¿Ha observado que haya alguna correlación entre un mayor esfuerzo en comunicación con mayores recaudaciones de fondos?

¿En qué factores considera que depende más la cantidad de fondos recaudada cada año?

¿Dirías que hay una correlación directa entre la cantidad de fondos invertidos en comunicación y el total recaudado?

Tipo de campañas utilizadas y su impacto

¿Cuál dirías que es el objetivo principal de la comunicación en su organización? ¿Es Brand awareness o fundraising?

¿Han observado una mayor correlación entre el tipo de campaña y los fondos recaudados? (*campañas emocionales, informativas, uso de celebrities, etc*)

Partnerships

¿En qué medida cree que las campañas de comunicación externa ayudan a conseguir estas colaboraciones privadas?

¿Ha observado alguna correlación entre una campaña de comunicación más extensa y un mayor número de nuevos partners?

Preguntas particulares para cada organización

Fundación Vicente Ferrer

Se puede observar una reducción en la recaudación de fondos de 2020 respecto al año anterior: ¿a qué cree que se debe? ¿cree que una campaña de comunicación más extensa podría estar relacionado con este resultado?

Médicos Sin Fronteras

¿Cuál es la diferencia entre socios y colaboradores activos?

Acción Contra el Hambre

En comparación con otras ONGs similares, Acción contra el Hambre recibe la mayoría de vuestros fondos de inversiones privadas. ¿por qué? ¿Ha sido una decisión consciente?

¿En qué medida creéis que las campañas de comunicación externa ayudan a conseguir estas colaboraciones privadas?