



Industry Attacks, Interference & Community Management

June 17 2026



**DIGITAL
ADVOCACY
CENTER**



Today's Presenters



Jesse Danzig,
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Digital**



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Digital Advocacy Training

June 17, 2026

Industry Attacks, Interference & Community Management

Training Purpose:

Learn and share strategies on evaluating industry attacks and appropriately responding to effectively mitigate the impacts on policy advocacy.

From this training, advocates will leave with the following knowledge:

- Key assessment criteria for crisis response.
- Best practices for scenario planning.
- Response framework for social media.
- Key learnings from peers in the field.
- How to build a crisis response from start to finish.



**THE BEST
DEFENSE
IS A GOOD
OFFENSE.”**

BUT CRISES ARE INEVITABLE



ISSUE

- A situation created by stakeholder discontent, often arising from change or proposed change
- Develops slowly
- Threatens attainment of organizational goals
- Can often be anticipated
- Requires a proactive strategy

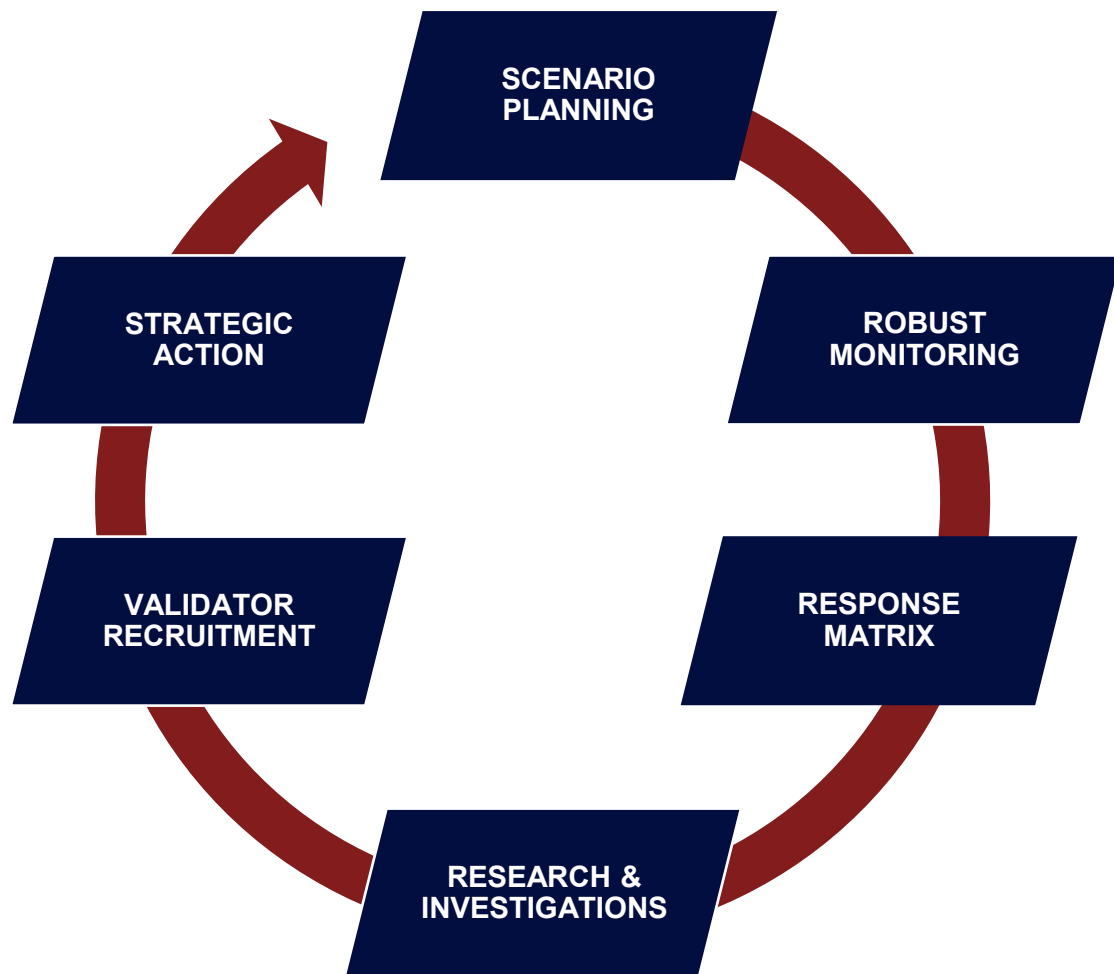


EMERGENCY

- Can take many forms, e.g. accident, natural disaster, terrorist attack, etc.
- Happens suddenly and unexpectedly
- Threatens lives and/or property
- Many types of emergency can be anticipated
- Requires an immediate response



A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH



SCENARIO PLANNING

Create scenario plans to anticipate potential risks and prepare messaging and tactics.

ROBUST MONITORING

Monitor traditional and social media to identify emerging themes and vocal antagonists.

RESPONSE MATRIX

Consider the nuances of the landscape and the potential reach to new audiences.

RESEARCH & INVESTIGATIONS

Identify connections between disparate entities and flush out the nexus.

VALIDATOR RECRUITMENT

Engage aligned voices across different industries.

STRATEGIC ACTION

Create an echo chamber of support or correct the record through various activities.



RESPONSE MATRIX: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA



Does the story make false or factually incorrect claims?



Has there been any mainstream pickup?



Can those claims be refuted with objective data?



Is this a narrative that would be dangerous if unchecked?



Was the story published in a trade or mainstream publication?



What type of journalist wrote the story?



What's the downside of a direct response?



How credible is the publication?



What's the upside of a direct response?



Is any social amplification occurring?



A FACT FIRST, DATA DRIVEN RESPONSE

When a response is appropriate, the Response Matrix outlines how to best combat false claims and correct the narrative before it leaves the pro-tobacco echo chamber and enters mainstream media.

●● Medium

Marc Gunther:
What's Wrong With
The WHO?



FILTER

The WHO Prioritizes
Youth Who Don't Smoke
Over Adults Who Do



LinkedIn

Derek Yach:
Nearly Half Of Men In
Turkey Smoke Despite
Tobacco Control Laws



A CLOSER LOOK: SCENARIO PLANS

Scenario plans are designed to help anticipate potential risks that could impact the ongoing work. The document should outline potential negative scenarios and provide recommended messaging, internal and external voices, communications tactics, and media holding statements.

Sample drivers of reputational issues:

CULTURAL

POLITICAL/LEGAL

INDUSTRY INTERFERENCE

MISINFORMATION

HOW DO YOU BUILD THEM?

VULNERABILITIES & ANTAGONISTS:

- Gather as much information as possible on all external factors that could shape an organization's reputation
- Form a large list of all the things that could go wrong, using the drivers of reputation risks as a guide

SCENARIO PLAN COMPONENTS:

- Tough questions
- Key messages, supported with credible proof points
- Voices/spokespeople, should be realistic
- Specific communications tactics
- Holding statement



SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSE MATRIX

KEY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA



**Direct
Threat**



**False
Accusations**



**Message
Resonance**



**Account
Credibility**



**Online
Engagement**



**Echo
Chamber**



SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSE TOOLKIT

EXTERNAL RESPONSE

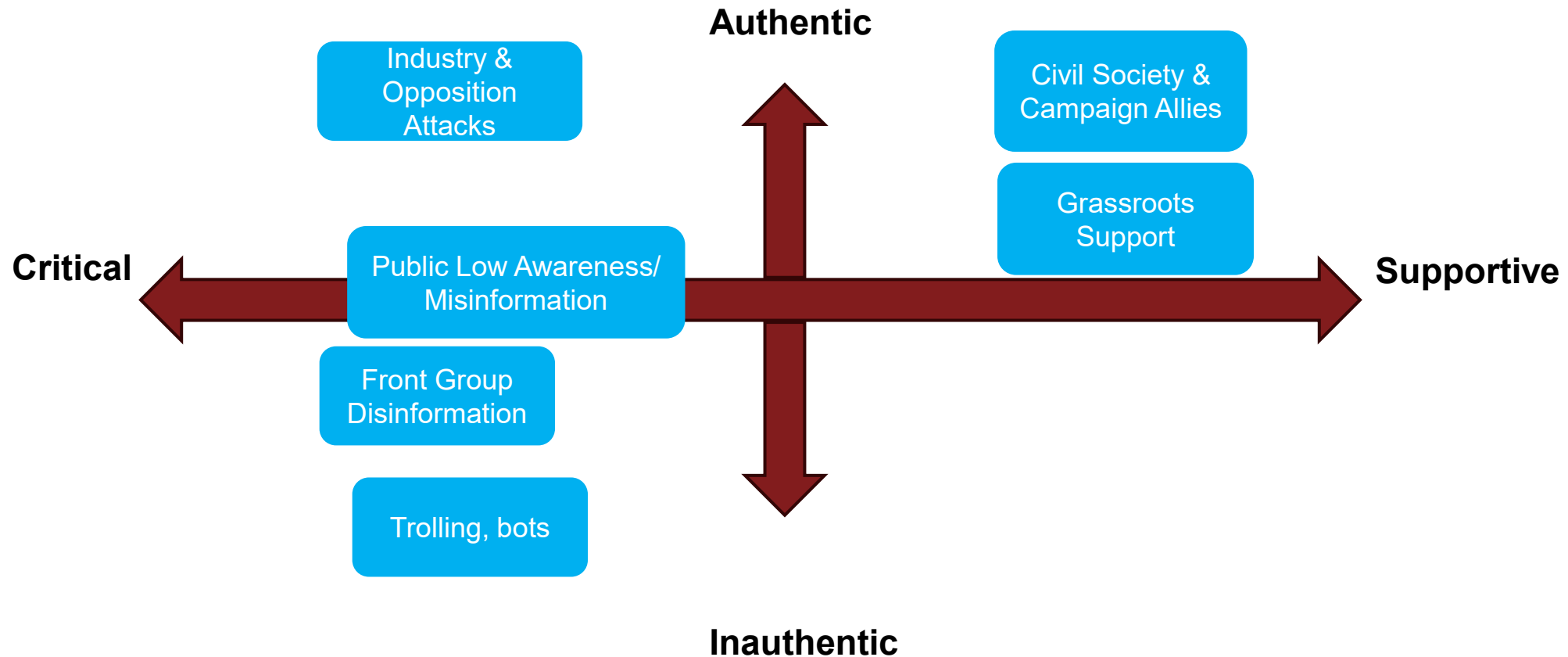
- ☑ Engage with existing content
- ☑ Share content without commentary
- ☑ Share content with commentary
- ☑ Publish a new post
- ☑ Draft an op-ed
- ☑ Issue a formal statement

INTERNAL RESPONSES

- ☑ Increase monitoring
- ☑ Media & narrative assessment
- ☑ Message development
- ☑ Partner meetings
- ☑ Government outreach



Landscape of Online Discourse





Online Negative Discourse Response Options

Ignore

Acknowledge

Educate

Hide

Delete

Block/Ban



CSO Roundtable Participants



Anelize Moreira

Journalist
ACT Brazil



**Louise Helen
Llanos**

Social Media
Officer

AER
Philippines



Effie Herdi

Head Campaign
Strategist

Lentera Anak
Indonesia



**Mable K.
Musinguzi**

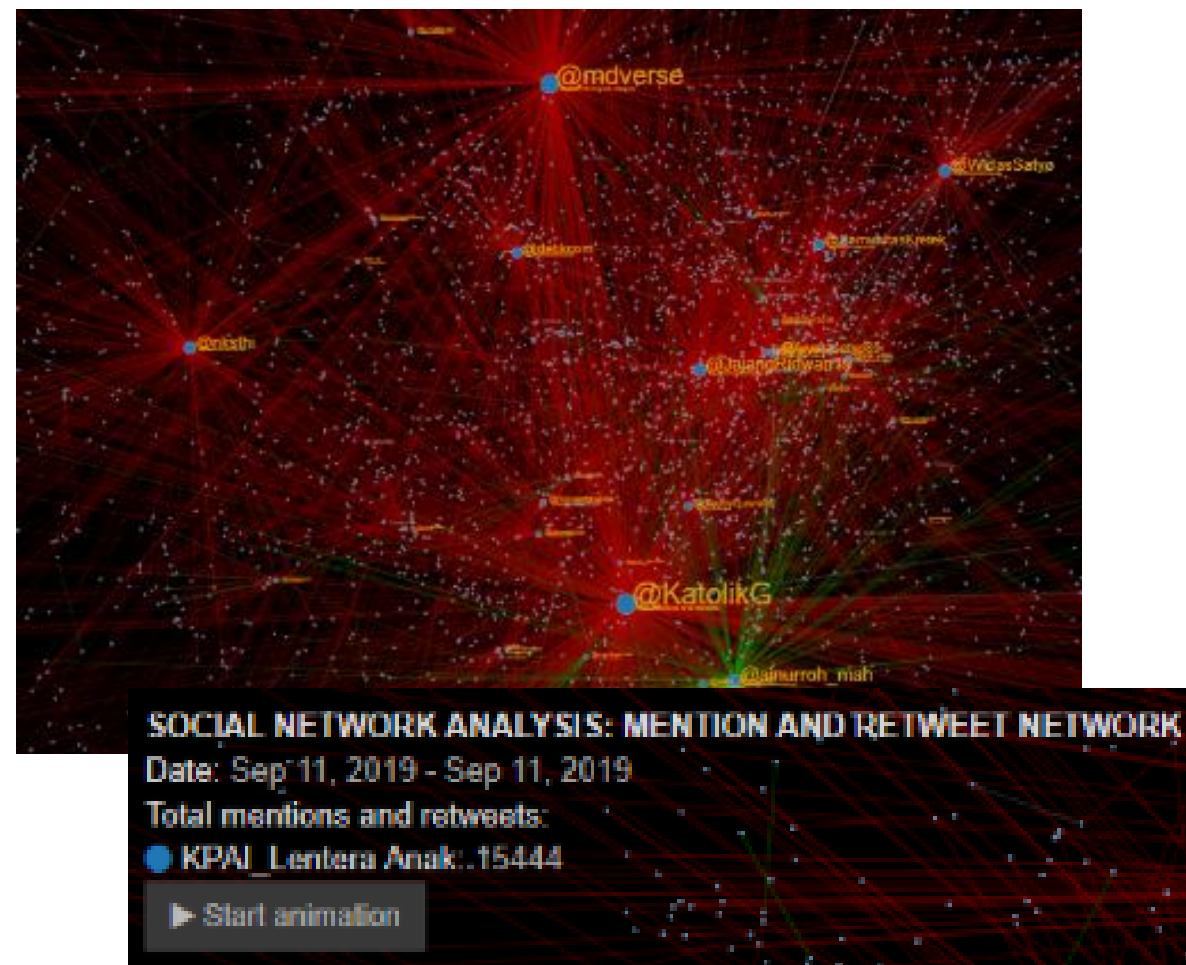
Senior Advocacy
and Networking
Officer

Uganda National
Health
Users/Consumers'
Organisation
(UNHCO)



Lentera Anak: Indonesia

- Industry tactics have become increasingly subtle and coordinated in Indonesia.
- Primary challenge: translating the massive amount of interference we document into strategic action and real accountability.
- Massive coordinated digital pushback: Ranging from highly orchestrated astroturfing campaigns on X (formerly Twitter) to targeted hate speech attacks on Instagram.
- Proactive crisis plan: Communication alignment, digital security against doxing, personal safety, reputation management, and long-term systemic risk mapping.



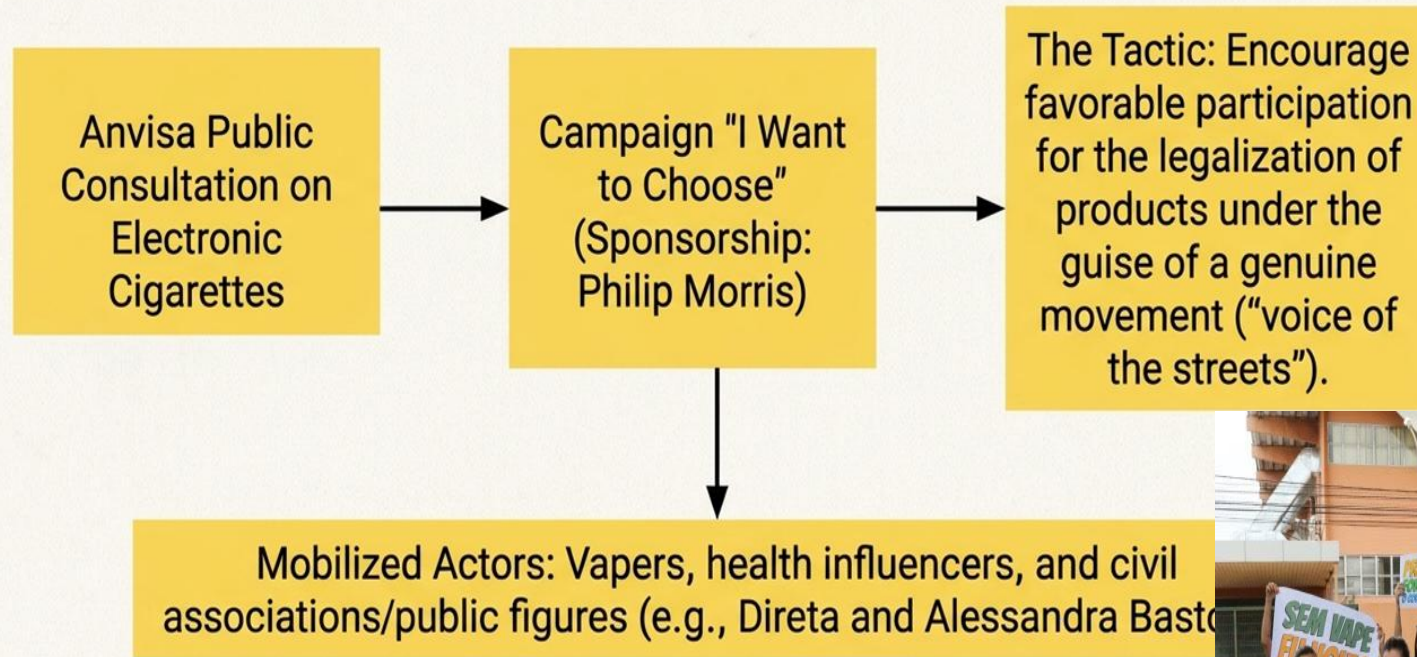


ACT Brazil

- Brazil is one of the world's largest tobacco producers and exporters.
- ACT focuses on monitoring and analyzing industry lobbying strategies.
- This includes:
 - Tracking legislative and regulatory debates
 - Monitoring the digital presence of industry actors and their allies
 - Using freedom of information requests to investigate interactions between industry representatives and policymakers.



Digital campaign calling for the release of the ESDs



Quero Escolher @quero_escolher

Saiba mais da consulta pública da ANVISA sobre cigarros eletrônicos e outras alternativas ao cigarro queroescolher.com

*Alternativas sem fumaça não são livres de risco e contêm nicotina, que gera dependência. O uso deve ser realizado somente por Adultos.

Regulamentar cigarros eletrônicos é uma **melhor opção** para adultos fumantes que, de outra forma, continuariam a fumar.

Os leitores adicionaram contexto que acharam que as pessoas poderiam gostar de saber

O site queroescolher.com é de propriedade da Philip Morris Brasil, como fica claro em seu rodapé. Ela é uma multinacional produtora de tabaco e seus derivados. Seu interesse nessa campanha é enviesado pelo seu desejo declarado de lucrar mais com vapes e reduzir investimento em cigarros.

queroescolher.com
pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_Mo...
valorinveste.globo.com/produtos/inves...
bloomberglinea.com.br/negocios/com-n...

Você acha isto útil?

O contexto é escrito por pessoas que usam o X e exibido quando avaliado como útil por outras pessoas. [Saiba mais](#)

Brazil: Monitoring interference in COP10 e COP11



The Monitor Being Monitored

Direct retaliation and attacks suffered during global conferences (COP10 and COP11).

Digital Surveillance

Recurrent and systematic access to professional profiles (LinkedIn) by individuals linked to the monitored sector.

Access Blocking

Access restrictions to sponsored media. (e.g., IPI and direct blocking of the journalist on sponsored media pages on Instagram).

Attacks on Credibility

Attempts at discrediting focused on ACT's funding (e.g., attacks targeting Bloomberg funding) instead of refuting data or evidence.

Personal Attacks

Physical intimidation of investigative journalists by industry allies, recorded during COP11.



AER: Philippines

- *Illicit Tobacco Trade in the Philippines* report launched late last year.
- Findings include:
 - The gravity of the illicit trade problem has been overexaggerated by the tobacco industry to serve its self-interests, and the issue is addressable through policy and enforcement.
- Marketing plan:
 - AER has worked to dispel economic misinformation and called for stronger enforcement and improved border controls to reduce illicit trade while also raising tobacco taxes to reduce consumption.





UNHCO: Uganda

- Uganda ranks **10th out of 100 countries** in the 2025 Tobacco Industry Interference Index, with a score of **41**.
- Recent legislation ended a seven-year lapse in tobacco tax increases that persisted despite increased inflation.
- Instead of passing higher excise taxes onto consumers, tobacco companies have absorbed the tax increases and kept the retail prices low to blunt the deterrent effect of taxation.

**LAUNCH OF THE
UGANDA
TOBACCO INDUSTRY INTERFERENCE INDEX 2025**

THEME: *"Unmasking Tobacco-Industry Tactics: Safeguarding Uganda's Health Policy for a Tobacco-Free Future"*

Recommendations:

1. *Transparency: Mandatory disclosure of all government-industry meetings*
2. *Accountability: End tobacco-funded CSR loopholes*
3. *Fiscal Protection: Resist lobbying against tobacco tax increases*

LIVE ON SPACES

26 MARCH 2026
12PM -1PM

LINK
[HTTPS://X.COM/I/SPACES/1VJPPRZYMPPJE?S=20](https://x.com/i/spaces/1vJPPRZYMPPJE?s=20)


UNHCO
The right to speak out



Additional Discussion Questions

1. In the event of negative online sentiment/attacks, how do you identify if attacks reflect real public backlash or an industry-driven astroturf campaign?
2. How do you moderate negative comments on your social media channels?
3. How do you prepare spokespeople to respond to attacks without repeating/magnifying industry claims and misinformation?
4. How can ambiguity/nuance around policy issues be communicated responsibly without fueling industry misinformation?
5. Which spokespeople are most credible at dispelling economic misinformation focused on small business, economic development, illicit trade, etc.?
6. How have you seen the industry shift the media conversation in your country away from public health evidence toward the credibility of advocates themselves? How have you responded directly or indirectly?
7. What industry-focused messaging do you see resonating with different audiences the most: parents, policymakers, youth, etc?

Common Industry Scenarios



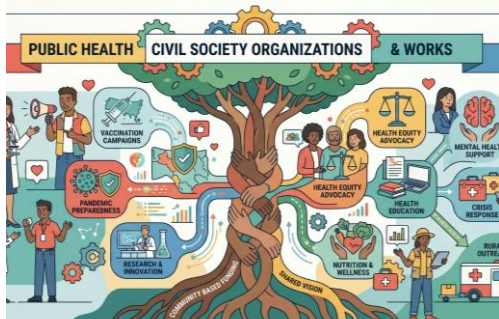
Coordinated Social Media Attack & Bot Amplification

Hundreds of negative comments appear across social platforms with coordinated messaging, anonymous accounts, and personal attacks.



Economic Misinformation Campaign

Public campaign claiming job losses, local business hardships, illicit trade increases, etc., due to tobacco control efforts.



Attack on Civil Society Legitimacy

Opponents launch a campaign arguing that public health groups are foreign-funded with an outside agenda, interfering with national sovereignty.

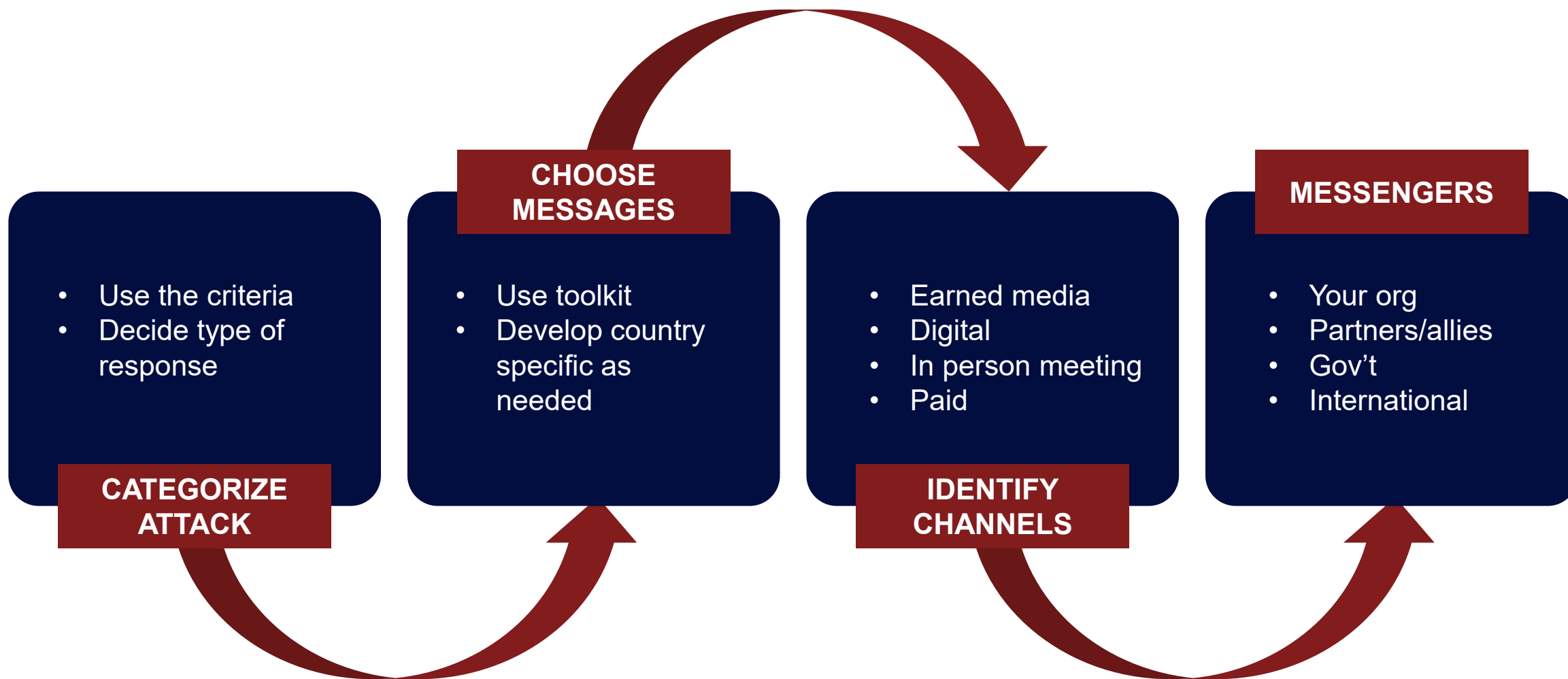


Harm Reduction Offensive

Misinformation claiming new products help smokers quit, youth concerns are exaggerated, and public health advocates are denying smokers access to safer alternatives.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER





AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Use the QR code or email bloombergphilanthropiesmonitoring@marathonstrategies.com if you would like access to the following resources.



DAILY
CLIPS



RESEARCH
REPORTS



MONTHLY
INSIGHT INDEX



Thank You!

www.digitaladvocacycenter.com



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