

The 2020 Infodemic and our permanently changed landscape for science and the media

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EPI • WiN

infodemic
MANAGEMENT

Then and Now: WHO Web

Web traffic is up more than 500% compared to this time last year



Since 1 January 2020

Week 01

~ 4 million page views

Week 12 (15 March)

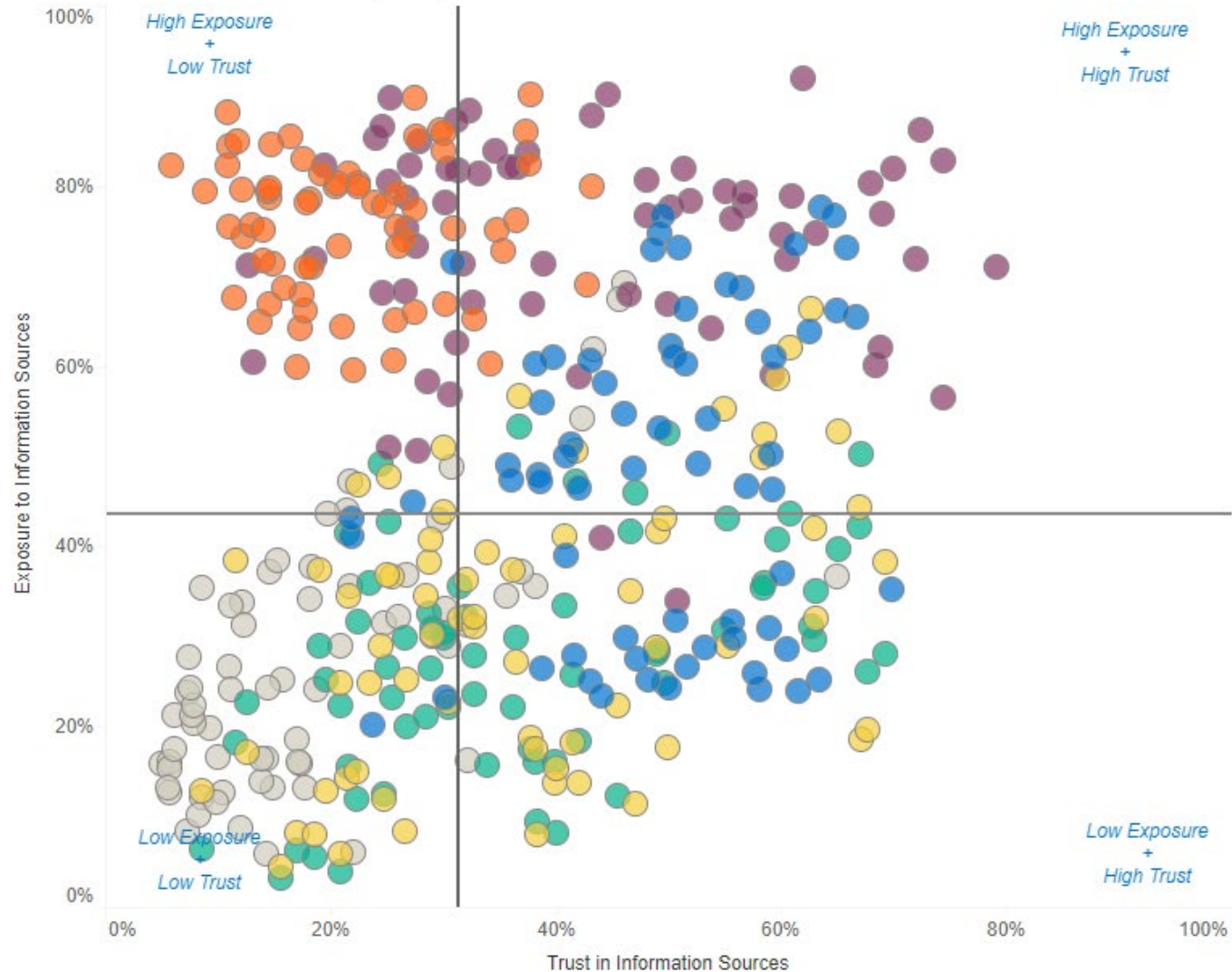
> 209 million page views

Week 44 (26 October)

Nearly 33 million page views

Trust in Information Sources

Which sources of COVID-19 information were most trusted?
Which sources were most frequently accessed?



Filter by information source

ctrl+click for multiple selections | double-click to clear selections

Health Workers
Radio
Online Sources
Television
Newspaper
Messaging App

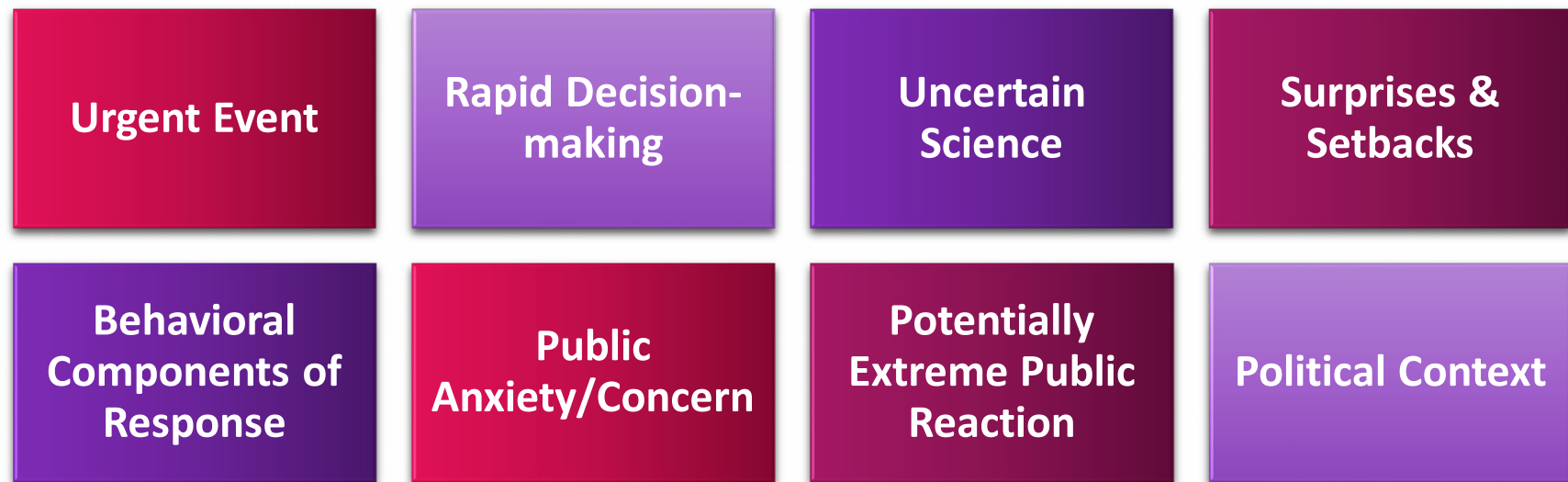
Generally, health communication programs use the most trusted and the most widely used information source in a given country to deliver information to the public.

This graphic can help determine which source might be best for a country.

In some countries, the trusted sources are not always the most frequently accessed.

Expected challenges of ALL public health emergencies

The Public Health Context



The Public Context

WHO, 2005

Expected challenges of ALL public health emergencies



UNCERTAINTY



Public concern
(RISK PERCEPTION)



LISTENING

We're not just fighting an epidemic; we're fighting an infodemic. Fake news spreads faster and more easily than this virus, and is just as dangerous.



infodemic:

tsunami of information - including false or misleading information- in digital and physical space during an epidemic

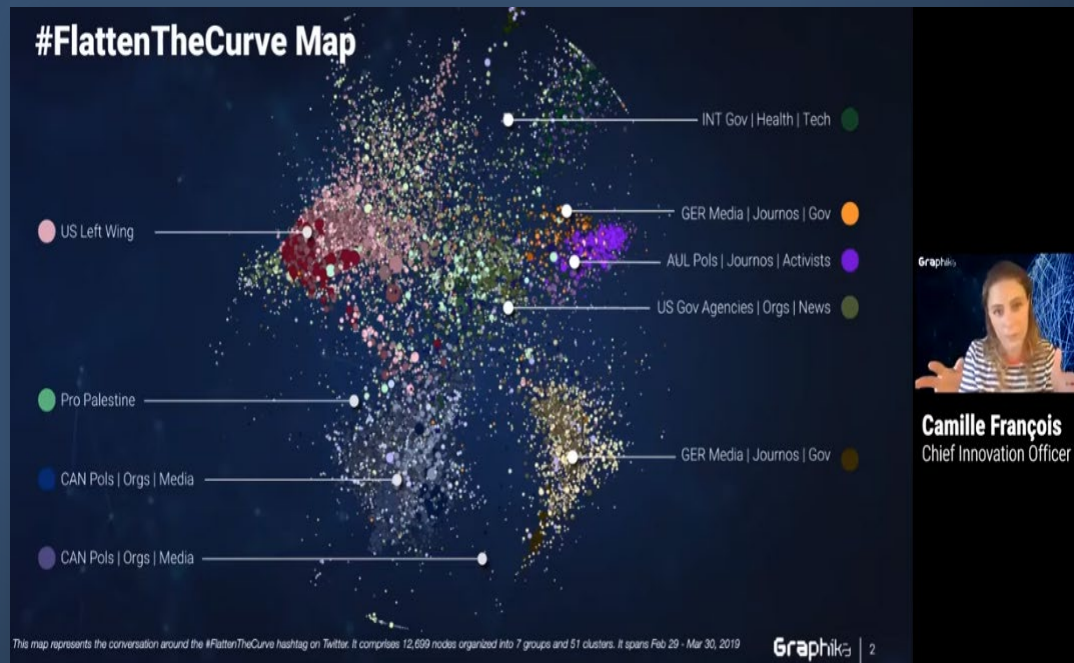
leads to confusion, risk-taking and harmful behaviors, and ultimately mistrust in governments and public health response

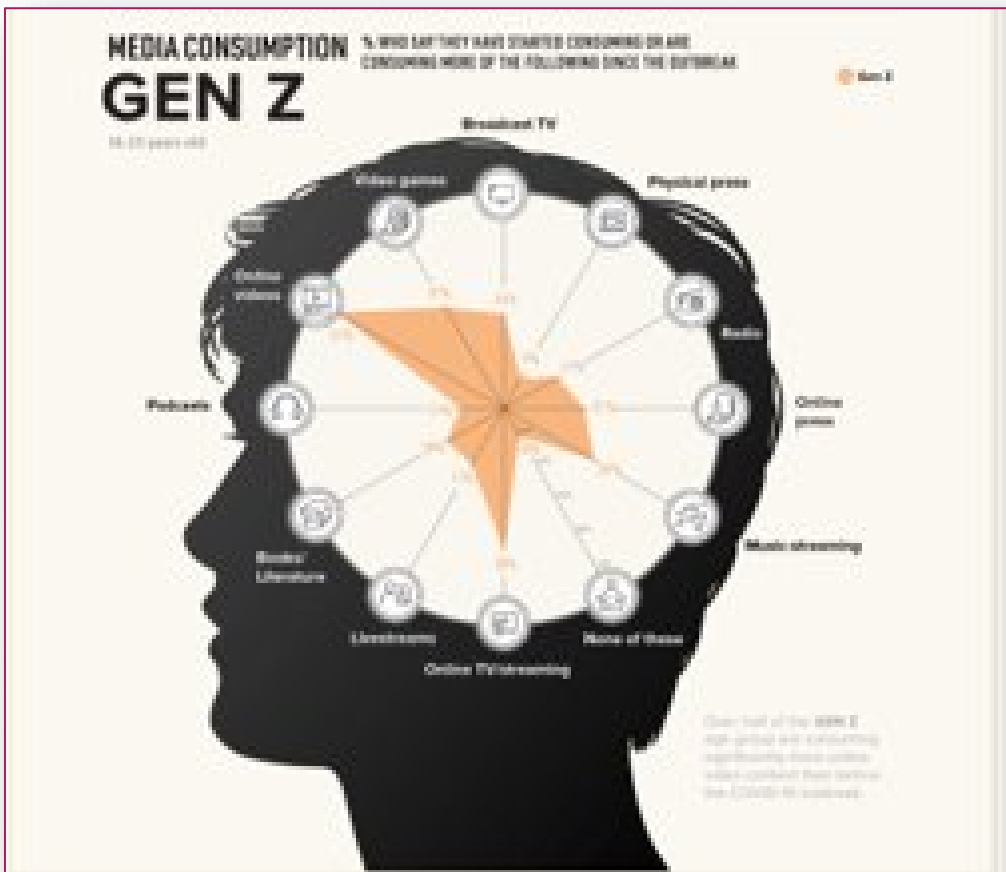
Infodemiology has provided some new 'maps' ...

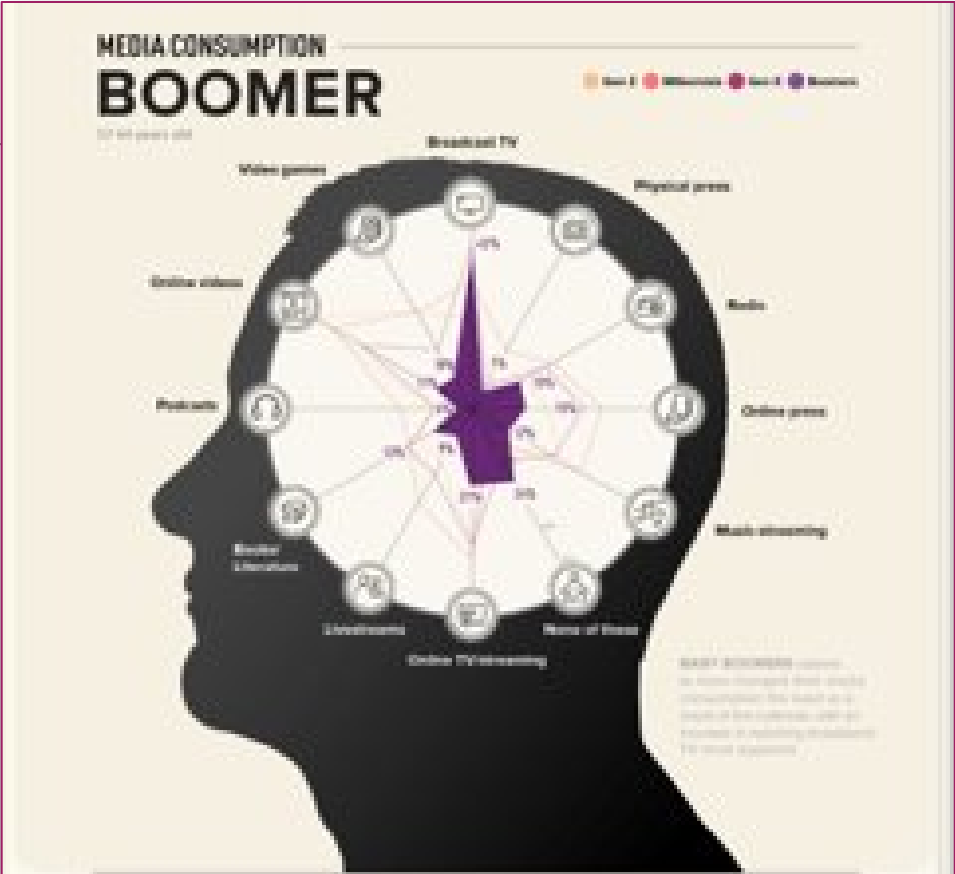
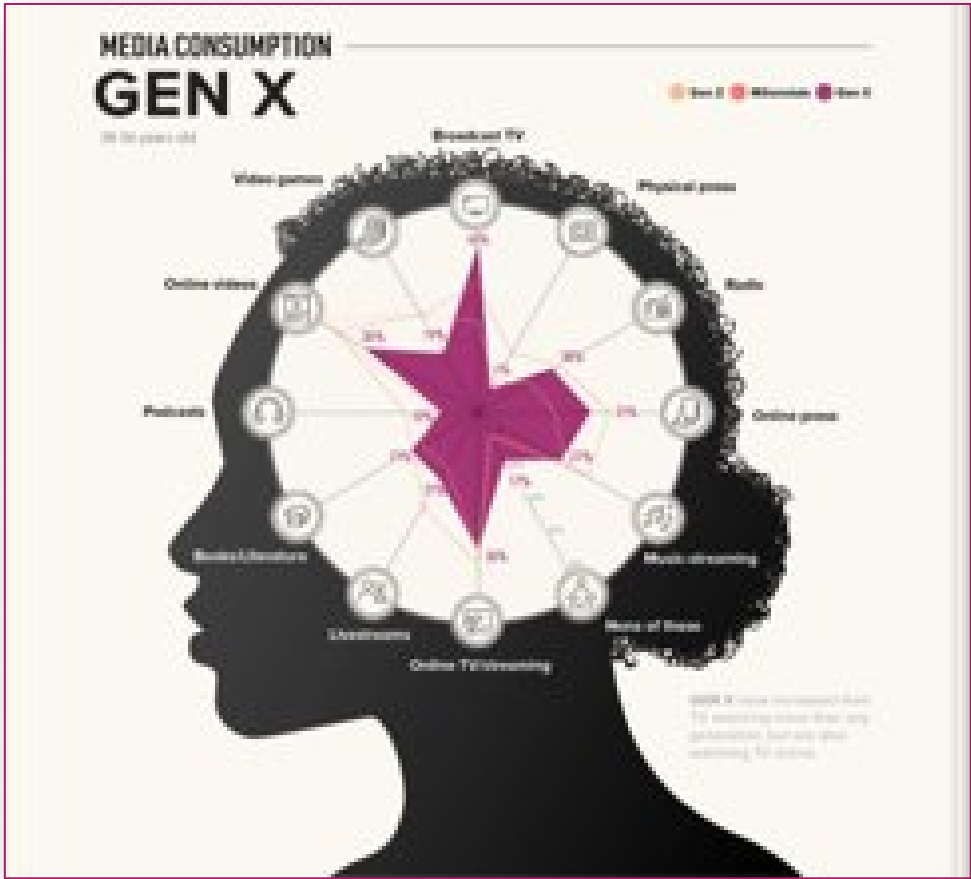
Network mapping can define on-line communities.

Mapping can show how communities are structured and relate to other communities.

Mapping can show us what communities specific messages are reaching or missing.



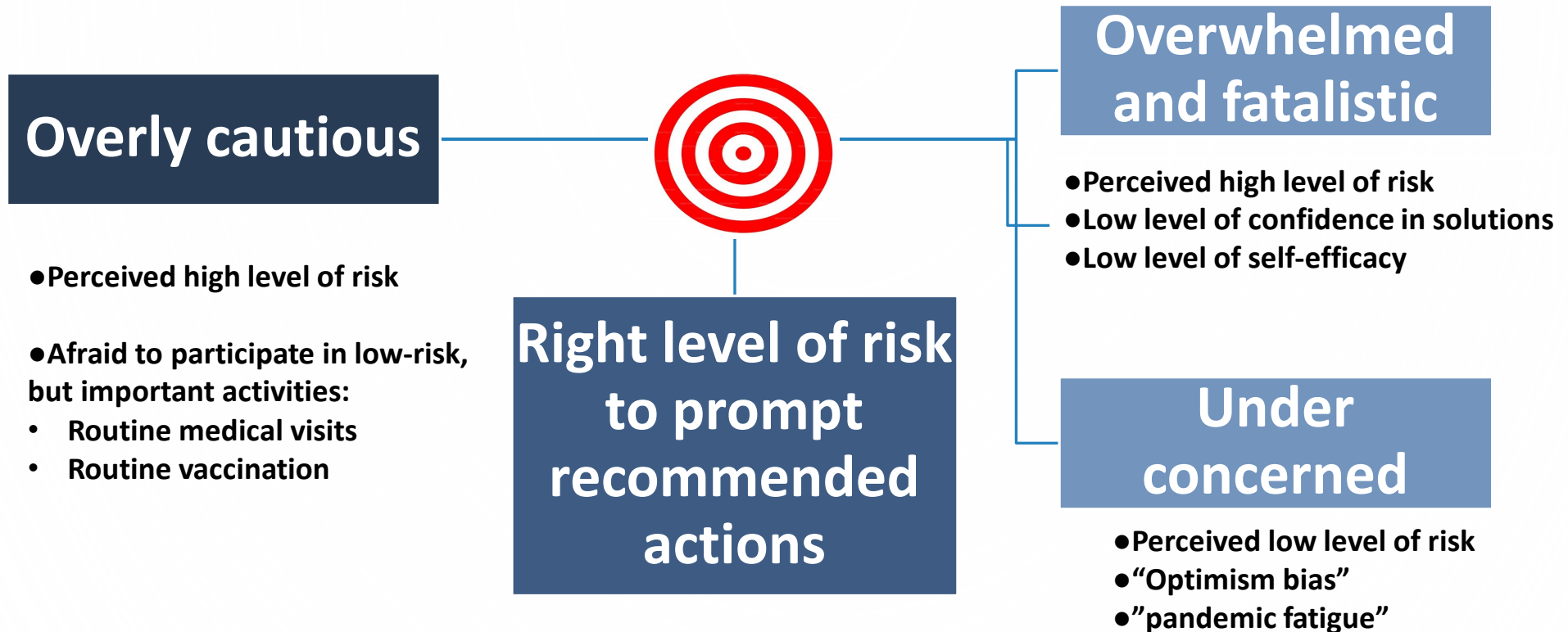






Risk Perception

COVID-19 Different Risk Perceptions



EURO, RCCE strategy for COVID-19; Van Bavel et al. 2020; Halpern, Truog, Miller, 2020; Nobel, 2020; Dahlberg 2020; Johns Hopkins, 2020; Lunn, et al., 2020)

Explaining the science does not influence risk perception

Public

Catastrophic or individual outcomes?
Personal control or control by others?
Permanent or temporary harm?
Affecting children or not?
Voluntary or involuntary exposure?
Familiar or novel threat?

Emotional/contextual dimension

Severity
Prevalence

**Scientists
&
Technical
Experts**

Cognitive dimension



Istockphoto.com

Loewenstein et al. 2004; Slovic 1992; Slovic, Malet 2014;



Managing Uncertainty

After 10 months: COVID-19 Still Awash in Uncertainties

NEWS
British government adviser calls for lockdown amid COVID-19 resurgence
By Sara Dorn | October 17, 2020 | 9:13am



Bloomberg
Nigeria Lifts Curfew on Africa's Biggest City After Protests
William Clowes · 1 hr ago

[f](#) [t](#) [w](#) [e](#)

Melbourne lifts one of world's longest lockdowns after 111 days
[The Washington Post](#) ^ | Oct. 28, 2020 | Antonia Noori Farzan and Antonia Noori Farzan
Posted on 10/28/2020, 6:58:00 PM by [MinorityRepublican](#)

news.com.au
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world coronavirus

China comes out of COVID-19 'absolutely laughing'

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Coronavirus
'On the brink of disaster': Europe's Covid fight takes a turn for the worse
As France imposes curfews, even countries that previously managed well are struggling badly

We still don't know . . .

When will it be safe to embrace my friends?

Are we in the first, second, or third “wave” of disease?

When will COVID-19 be over?

How long can COVID-19 affect people?

If I was already infected and recovered, am I immune? For how long?

When will there be a vaccine to prevent COVID-19?

When can my children go back to school?

How many people will ultimately die from COVID-19?

How can we balance needs of the economy with stopping COVID-19?

How long before I can travel internationally?

Will COVID-19 mutate?

Where is it safe to travel now?

Are any treatments effective against COVID-19?

Is the virus that lands on surfaces enough to infect someone?

Is it safe to go back to work?

Transparency and Consistency: Messaging to Manage Uncertainty

- Direct and explicit public communication about uncertainties is associated with trust
 - Transparency is highly valued
 - Say what is known with what is unknown
 - Set expectations for change
- Information must be consistent
 - Over time
 - Between sources
- Discrepancies must be explained
- When you don't have the answer, be transparent about how decisions are being made.

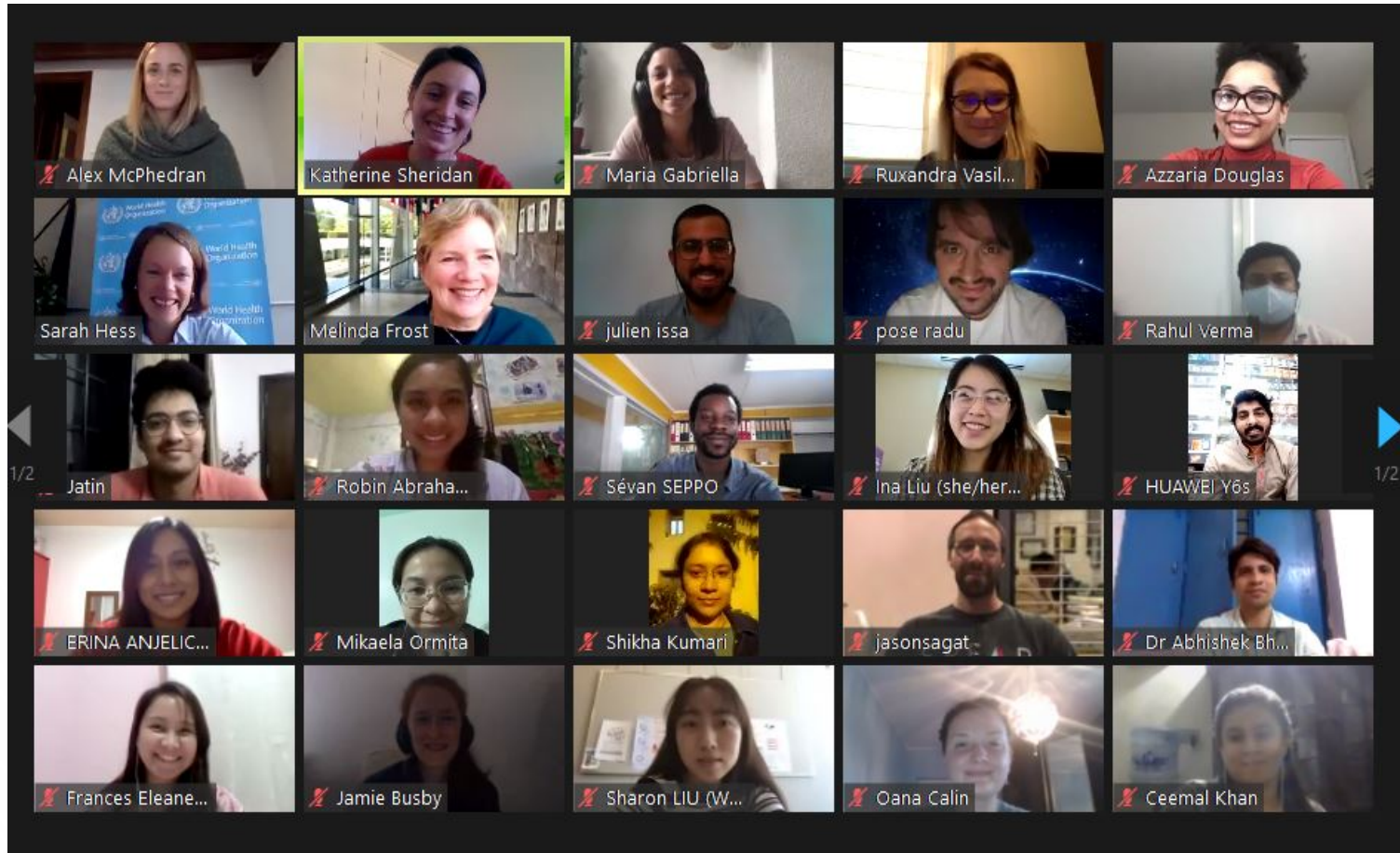


Sopory, et al., (2019).; WHO, 2018; Savoia, Viswanth K. 2015;
Schock-Spana et al, 2016; Holmes 2009, Pappenberer 2018, Quinn 2008,
Taylor-Clark 2007; Infanti, et al. 2013).



LISTENING

Redefining what a 'community' is...



Whom do we work with?

GUCCI

facebook.

Uber

Rakuten Viber



amazon

Radisson



tinder

Google

YouTube

WPP

ebay

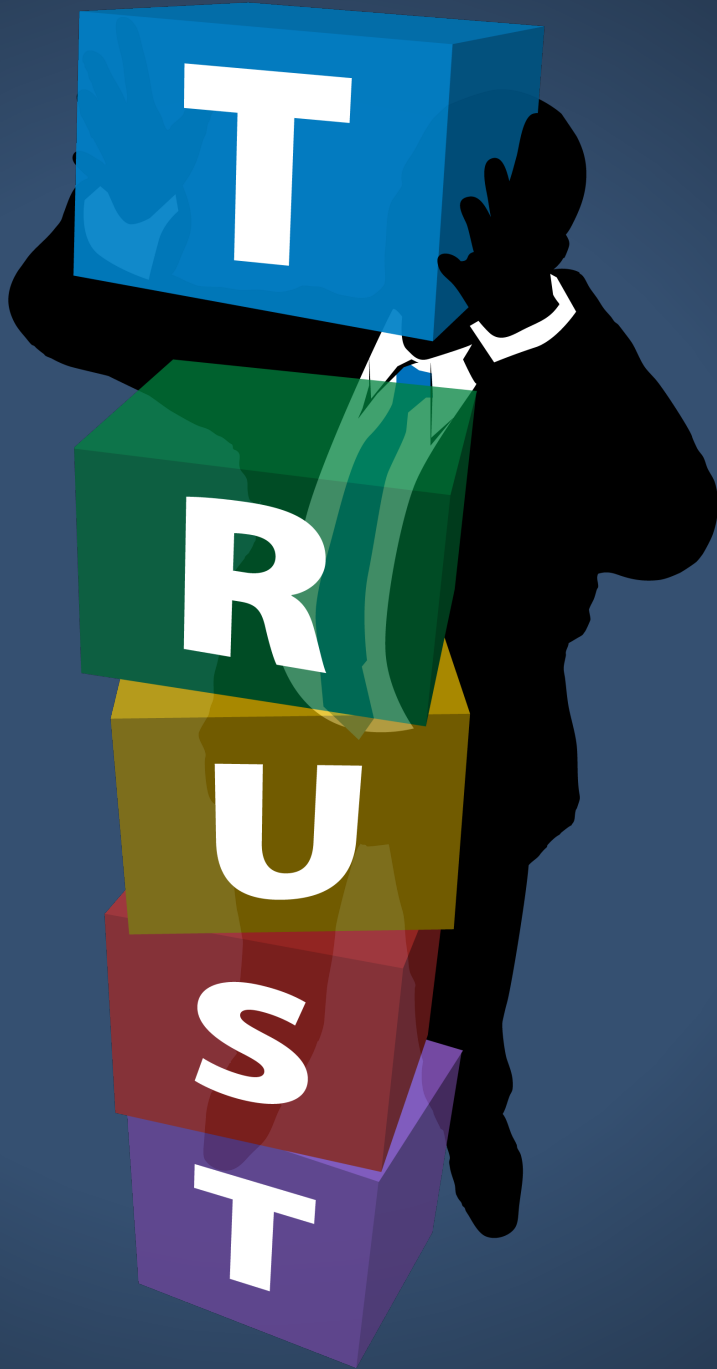
Disney

PLAY
A PART
TOGETHER

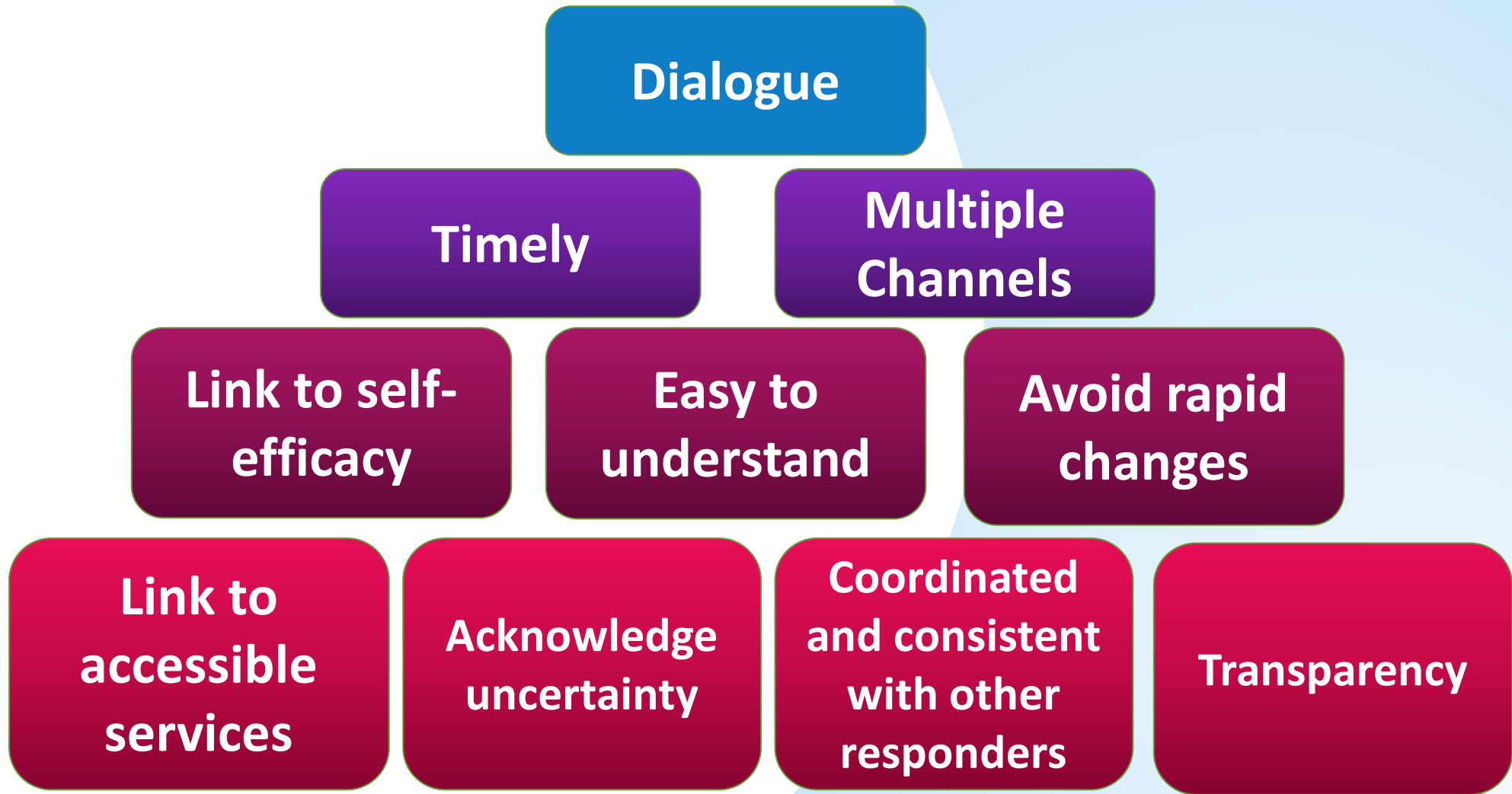
soul
machines

ubongo kids
by ubongo

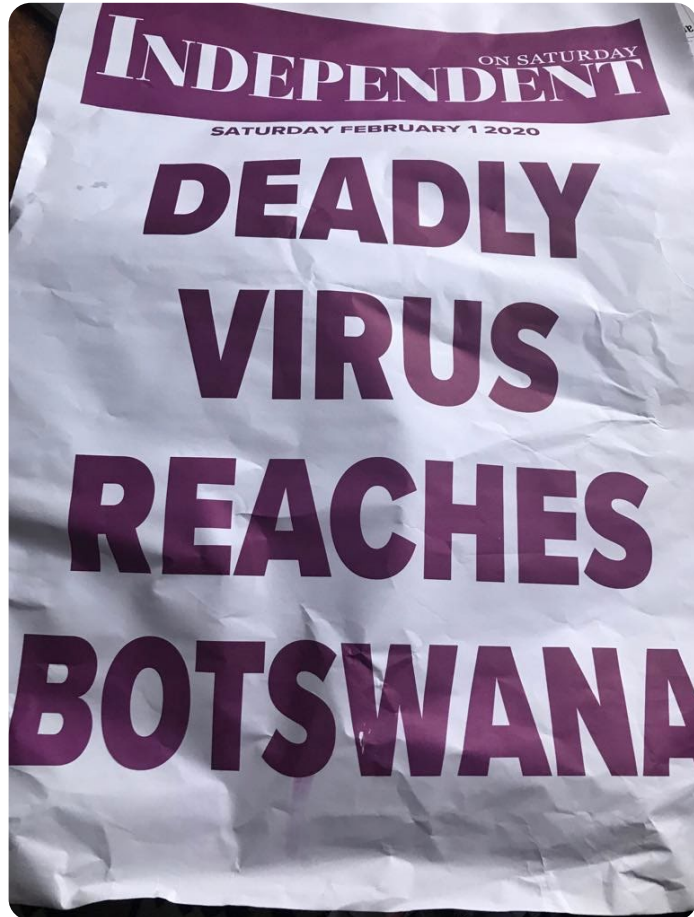
Hill+Knowlton
Strategies



Building a Foundation of Trust through Messaging



Identifying rumours: knowing the facts about COVID-19 and the response



- Fact-check and Reality-check
- More than a health story, more than a science story ...
- Reaching those who need it most

Ida Jooste, Global Health Adviser, Internews

Reporting to help people take action

- Be prepared and coordinate
- Help your audiences – offer practical, actional information and ‘news you can use’
- Mitigate and counter rumour, mis- and dis-information and stigma
- Motivate your audiences to cope

Genevieve Hutchinson, BBC Media Action



Questions?