PROJECT BREAK! RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEDIA INTERVENTION AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

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RASI

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Rahvusvaheliste Sotsiaaluuringute Keskus (RASI) on Tallinna Ülikooli Ühiskonnateaduste Instituudi sotsiaalteaduslik interdistsiplinaarne teadus- ja arenduskeskus, mis teostab teadusprojekte. RASI teadurid on tegevad ekspertidena ühiskonnaelu analüüsimisel ja kujundamisel. TLÜ RASI uurimisteemad hõlmavad ühiskondliku ebavõrdsuse (või ka kihistumise) erinevaid tahke – sugu, rahvus, vanus, põlvkond, haridus, ametipositsioon. Viimastel aastatel on hakatud suurt tähelepanu pöörama elukestva õppe problemaatikale kui eluteed kujundavale ja sotsiaalset sidusust Eestis ning laiemalt kogu Euroopa Liidus tagavale tegurile. Teine uuem temaatika osakonna uurimistöös on seotud aktiivse vananemise küsimustega.

This report is prepared as part of project BREAK! See http://bre-ak.eu

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Preface

The aim of the BREAK! cross-media project is to influence the audience in the direction of open-mindedness regarding gender role stereotypes - to empower (young) people and help them to overcome stereotype based barriers concerning occupational choices. In order to produce change – promoting desirable dispositions and practices and hindering undesirable dispositions and practices among the target groups (young people and those who can most directly influence their career choices – teachers, parents, career advisors, employers) – a cross-media intervention has been designed.

The tasks of the methodological strand of the project are to

a) propose intervention methods that have proved to be effective in previous interventions,
b) to measure and describe the effects of cross-media intervention, and
c) to explain the observed effects by reference to theoretical frames.

The project is ideologically loaded: it stands for egalitarianism, equal opportunities, social (gender) equality, respecting human rights and human dignity in everyone. This 'bias' is necessarily guiding project activities and provides us with framework for designing and assessing the relevance of the intervention. We need to acknowledge that in current context of rising right-wing populism with anti-feminist bias, spreading inconsiderate rhetoric in the public sphere across Europe (Kovats, 2018) such focus may become sensitive in itself. However, acknowledging the two main virtues behind the project – providing best opportunities for every individual to explore and activate their individual strengths and interests also in the labour market without facing barriers by stereotypes; and promoting acceptance also of non-traditional occupational choices and thus reach the more inclusive as well as more productive labour force – the project is inherently relevant across times and ideologies.

On behalf of the project team, we hope you find the approaches taken in this project inspiring and the experiences of the project team insightful.

We have divided the message into three papers: report outlining the requirements, choices and experiences of designing the intervention; report on recommendations on what to consider when planning such an intervention; and report on measuring and understanding outcomes of the project.

Further information is available from project website *http://bre-ak.eu*

Contents

1 Recommendations regarding the core principles of media intervention campaign

Meta-analysis of mass media campaigns that are aimed at changing audience attitudes and behaviour, reveal that application of certain elements are related to campaign success. Below the main principles of effective campaign design applied to health mass media campaigns are listed (following Noar, 2006, p. 25), claiming that *success is more likely when campaign designers...*

- Conduct *formative research* with the target audience to clearly understand the behaviour and the problem area; *pretest messages* with target audience to be sure they are both appropriate and effective
- Use *theory as a conceptual foundation* to the campaign; theory will suggest important determinants around which to develop messages, and will help ensure that campaign messages guide individuals through the process of attitude and/or behaviour change
- *Segment audience into meaningful subgroups* based on important characteristics such as demographic variables, risk characteristics, experience with the behaviour, personality characteristics, and so forth
- Use a *message design* approach that is targeted to and likely to be effective with the audience segment; develop novel and creative messages; design messages that will spark interpersonal discussions and may persuade individuals important to the target audience (e.g., influencers)
- *Place messages in channels* widely viewed by the target audience; strategically position campaign messages within the selected channels
- *Conduct process evaluation* including monitoring and collecting of data on implementation of campaign activities; ensure high message exposure among members of the target audience, including both reach and frequency
- Use a sensitive *outcome evaluation* design that reduces threats to internal validity and permits firm causal conclusions about the campaign's influence on attitudes and behaviours to be made".

These main elements can be modified according to particular circumstances of a project.

2 Recommendations concerning message design

Below a set of intervention tools and approaches are presented that theoretically should be or empirically have been effective in prejudice reduction and combatting stereotypes.

2.1 Interventions on the individual level

On this level prejudice reduction or stereotype modification proceeds through influencing cognitive or emotional processes of an individual (Paluck & Green, 2009), and we will explore the interventions through emotional; cognitive; and behavioural approaches.

2.1.1 EMOTIONAL APPROACHES

- **Perspective taking** – perceiving a situation from an alternative point of view (that of another individual or group) evokes feelings of similarity and closeness, thus reducing stereotyping. (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000),
- **Promoting empathy** towards stigmatized groups leads to prejudice reduction and greater readiness for contacts (Esses & Dovidio, 2002).
- **Fear reduction.** The topic of gender neutrality may evoke fear among some people. Mass media tends to treat the topic of gender neutrality as sensational, thus provoking fears of losing gender differences and raising up 'sexless' children. Correctness in the use of gender related terms might be useful or even crucial in this level

2.1.2 COGNITIVE APPROACHES

- **Counter-stereotypical information** in different forms, even in imagination. Matheus (2010) asked people to imagine in details a strong and successful woman who supervises a construction site. As the result of such intervention, gender occupational stereotypes were reduced. Long-term exposure to counter-stereotypical role models that challenge existing gender stereotypes (like mothers in non-traditional work, female politicians), as well as explicit encouragement may enhance young people's aspiration towards non-stereotypical roles (Olsson & Martiny, 2018).
- **Being aware of stereotypes, their replacement with knowledge.** Gender stereotypes are often justified by referring to profound biological differences between the sexes and hence lower intellectual abilities of women. Critical analysis of previous studies (Saini, 2017) enables to argue that psychological differences between men and women are not great and cannot explain social inequality.
- **Change of subjective norms.** Stereotypes and prejudices can be effectively changed when subjective norms (perceived social pressure) about appropriate and inappropriate behaviour or way of thinking are changed. If a person is told that a particular stereotype is not normative in his group, individual stereotype disappears. Prejudices and discrimination are preserved only with the support of social norms. Norms can be changed through education or new formal regulations.

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- **Awareness and accountability**. Stereotypes can be weakened if a person has to provide concrete reasons for his prejudices or he becomes aware of inconsistency between his beliefs and behaviour.
- **Self-affirmation**. People are less likely to endorse prejudiced beliefs when their own self-worth is affirmed.

2.1.3 BEHAVIORAL APPROACHES

- **Nudging -** Interventions through designing environmental affordances or barriers (nudges) to channel behaviour in a certain direction. Nudging is focused on influencing automatic system of behaviour regulation, differently from argumentative persuasion that is focused on conscious deliberative regulation system (Kahnemann, 2014). A nudge is any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behaviour in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives. To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). There are numerous behavioural levers that can affect non-conscious decision making (e.g. Halpern, 2015, Dolan et al., 2010) – framing the message, emotional or rational arguments, simplicity, humour, etc.

2.2 Interventions on the interpersonal and group level

Group level interventions against stereotypes can use the following approaches:

2.2.1 CREATING MUTUAL INTERDEPENDENCY

Creating mutual interdependency, cooperation and division of tasks in the process of solving common problems (Deutsch, 1949) is a method often used in school class contexts where group learning has been effective in negative stereotype reduction towards members of stigmatized groups.

2.2.2 PROMOTING OPTIMAL INTER-GROUP CONTACTS

One strategy is promoting **optimal inter-group contacts**, where the partners have equal status, have common goals, and their cooperation is supported by authorities (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Such conditions lead to the reduction of negative prejudices as it is repeatedly demonstrated (e.g. Cook, 1971). Arranging positive contacts with representatives of another group are effective methods for neutralizing stereotypes as simplified and false beliefs about this group. If a person gets information that question validity of a stereotype, he may abandon this stereotype.

2.2.3 CREATING COMMON GROUP IDENTITY

Creating **common group identity** (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) could be useful. One method in this direction is decategorisation or individualization – giving up group based definition of a person and focusing on her individual attributes. Another way is re-categorization, finding a common

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overarching category into which members of different groups belong (being a human being). Common group identity can be formed in the conditions of cooperative relationships and pursuing a common goal.

2.2.4   PROMOTING GROUP DISCUSSIONS

(Social) marketing efforts to influence the audience's attitudes or behaviour are more effective if the topics are discussed in small groups, so that norms become explicit (Lewin, 1958). Prejudices and stereotypes as social representations can be changed through group processes.

2.2.5   BYSTANDER INVOLVEMENT

Bystander involvement is an action taken by a person who witnesses incidents of norm violation (like racist or discriminative practices) with the aim of stopping the incident or reducing the risk of its escalation. The power of bystander involvement lies in the fact that it happens in social contexts and therefore has the potential to influence social norms (Nelson et al., 2010).

2.3   Interventions on the community and societal level

2.3.1   INTERVENTIONS THROUGH MASS MEDIA

The principles of **social learning theory** (Bandura, 1977) have been widely applied in mass media social campaigns worldwide that aim to influence social behaviours, particularly behaviours that are complex or involve interactions with other people. Social (or observational) learning theory stipulates that people can learn new behaviours by observing others. The principles of social learning can be applied to almost any social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) program that aims to influence social behaviours, particularly behaviours that are complex or involve interactions with other people. It may be especially useful when a particular behaviour is difficult to describe, but can be explained through demonstration or modelling. Also, when adopting or practicing a particular behaviour requires overcoming barriers or challenges, social learning principles can be used to demonstrate how a person can overcome those challenges and succeed. Finally, because people tend to adopt and practice behaviours they see others doing, social learning principles can be used to change perceptions of the social environment, making behaviours seem more common and providing social support to people who are considering a behaviour change.

The most important concepts of social learning theory are **modelling**, **efficacy** and **parasocial interaction**.

- **Modelling** in an SBCC program refers to the use of messages that show someone (a real person or an actor) performing a desirable behaviour. **Models** can be positive (doing the right thing and being rewarded) or negative (doing the wrong thing and suffering the consequences), however research shows that negative models are less likely than positive models to motivate behaviour change.
- **Efficacy** describes a feeling of personal empowerment or confidence in one's ability to perform a particular behaviour. Efficacy increases with experience, either direct personal

experience or vicarious experience. Vicarious experience can be gained by observing the success or failure of real people or by becoming cognitively and emotionally involved with fictional characters or models who succeed.

- **Parasocial interaction** takes place when people begin to identify with and think of fictional characters as if they were real people. Social learning theory can help program designers identify the types of characters that most attract the audience, the benefits of a behaviour that people value, and the types of stories that give people increased confidence in their ability to perform a behaviour and achieve those benefits. (Health communication Capacity Collaborative, 2016)

Central components in TV series with social aims based on sociocognitive theory (Bandura, 2006) are characters representing different segments of the population, adopting beneficial attitudes and behaviour patterns, thus functioning as models for different segments of the audience. Seeing people similar to themselves changing their lives for the better not only helps to create emotional involvement and conveys strategies how to do it, but also raises viewers' sense of efficacy that they can also overcome obstacles and succeed. Three types of contrasting models are used: *positive models, negative models* and *transitional models* who are shown to change their adverse type of attitudes or behaviour into beneficial ones. The plot contains various obstacles and effective ways of overcoming them. The viewers are shown how to be resilient in spite of setbacks and where to find social support for personal change. With these means an edutainment TV series can inform, enable, motivate and guide the audience in the socially desired direction, and assists people in their efforts to change their lives by referring to supportive communities and beneficial social institutions.

2.3.2   CHANGING SOCIAL PRACTICES

Interventions that target the change of social practices as dynamic systems of **meanings** (social norms, rules, understandings, ideologies), **skills and competencies**, and supporting **infrastructure** (material environment, formal regulations), are context-sensitive and specific. They include involvement of the target group into co-creation process and coalition building (Vihalemm et al., 2015).

2.4   Interventions through mass media

2.4.1   POSITIVE, NEGATIVE AND TRANSITIONAL ROLE MODELS

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2.4.2   ENTERTAINMENT AND EDUCATION

The **entertainment overcoming resistance model** (Moyer- Gusé, 2008) explains why narratives may be successful in changing attitudes and behaviour. It proposes that because narratives are entertaining, they reduce cognitive resistance against the message. Specifically, the model makes seven propositions (Moyer- Gusé, 2008):

a) The narrative structure of entertainment-education messages will overcome reactance by diminishing the viewer's perception that the messages is intended to persuade.
b) Parasocial interaction (PSI) with a central character, and liking a central character can enhance the persuasive effects of entertainment-education content by reducing reactance.
c) PSI with characters will enhance the persuasive effects of embedded messages in entertainment content by reducing counter arguing.
d) Identification with a character in an entertainment-education program will overcome the selective avoidance due to inertia.
e) The enjoyment associated with viewing an entertainment-education narrative will overcome selective avoidance due to fear.
f) Perceived similarity and identification with a vulnerable character will enhance the persuasive effects of entertainment-education content by increasing a viewer's perceived vulnerability.
g) PSI with a character displaying counter normative behaviour will enhance the persuasive effects of entertainment-education content by changing viewers' perceived norms.

2.4.3   HUMOUR

Humour may be helpful for delivering socially relevant content. A study (Chattoo & Feldman, 2017) compared the audience response after watching two documentaries with the same content (global poverty), one humorous, and the other serious. People learned more about the issues by watching the traditional somber documentary, but their emotional response was more intense watching the humorous documentary. Emotional response is necessary for audience engagement. The authors propose a mixed-message approach - comedy can function as an opening gateway to serious social issues, complemented by more serious and informative messages.

Humour can be a **tool for educating and changing** people's norms and beliefs. It functions through

- attracting attention: comedy can expose audiences to new messages and can help them remember the information.
- evoking feelings
- entering complex social issues in an accessible format
- breaking down social barriers: comedy can introduce new norms and desirable forms of behaviour in non-threatening ways that encourage identification and connection, rather than alienation.
- motivating people to share with others
- exposing harmful stereotypes and making them ridicule

3 Revising guidelines: lessons from the project BREAK!

The following guidelines derive from the experiences of the BREAK! project. The BREAK! project piloted the possibilities to combat harmful stereotypes related to gender and occupations, by using large-scale cross-media intervention together with educational activities. The evaluation of the process and outcomes of this project may give valuable lessons for successive analogous endeavours. While full process review is accessible in a separate document, the following guidelines derive from the experiences of the BREAK! project.

3.1 Recommendations concerning target groups and agents who can influence young people's occupational choices

The population (as well as each of its subgroups, including special target groups) is heterogeneous in gender related dispositions and practices and any interventions have different effect on various segments of population. It is necessary to inform people about this heterogeneity and its sources (interests, traditions, stereotypes, group positioning, etc.). The change of the proportions of gender attitudes in society and in different subgroups (e.g. gender liberal, gender conservative and gender blind segments) should be monitored. Enablers and barriers to understanding and practicing gender equality in specific groups and contexts should be studied.

3.1.1 YOUNG PEOPLE: AWARENESS, SELF EFFICACY AND MEDIA LITERACY

Analysis of the reception of the TV series revealed that self-confidence and perseverance of the main character impressed and inspired majority of our respondents. The empowering effect, increased sense of self-efficacy of young people may be an important outcome of the intervention. Belief in oneself and one's capacity to succeed helps to overcome prejudices and harmful stereotypes as external barriers and make optimal and authentic choices. Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) is applicable to development of interventions targeted at increasing individuals' self-efficacy in a variety of areas, for example, promoting aspirations and interests in children and adolescents, expanding career choice options, fostering positive and realistic outcome expectations, setting specific goals, coping with barriers and building supports.

It is necessary to teach critical attitude to the (social) media content and media influencers and promote media literacy among young people.

On the other hand: while young were generally receptive to the media content (the TV series), they were rather inaccessible from the traditional media communication, thus extra attention should be put on channelling to this target group information about the new content in the ways they could be able to notice this and become familiar with it.

3.1.2 TEACHERS: AWARENESS, SELF-EFFICACY AND SUPPORT

Our experience showed that teachers actually need training and support to handle the topic of gender equality and gender sensitive career choices.

It is thus crucial to

- Help to raise awareness by providing continuous training courses on gender and career issues-
- Involve teachers in preparing additional teaching materials and sharing their teaching experiences.
- Promote teachers' self-efficacy and provide them with sustainable support in teaching gender and career related issues.

3.1.3   CAREER SPECIALISTS: AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

- Continue to prepare materials and trainings for career advisors on the issues of gender to help them to give gender sensitive career guidance
- Create sites for discussion and sharing experiences.

3.1.4   PARENTS: AWARENESS AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

Parents should be able to support their children in making career choices but are often themselves helpless in the turbulent environment. Thus;

- Help to raise awareness by providing training courses on gender issues and career choices for parents of underage children-
- Create and moderate sites for discussion and sharing experiences between parents.
- Be attentive to each child! Help to find their calling among traditional or non-traditional occupational choices!
- Be aware of heterogeneity of gendered practices and dispositions in society. Be aware of the normativity of gender equality in European countries, and that the subject is integrated into school curriculum.

3.1.5   EMPLOYERS: AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

Studies indicate low awareness among employers concerning their responsibilities to promote gender equality and avoid discrimination at work (Roosalu et al., 2013). Thus:

- Help to raise awareness by providing training courses for employers where laws and regulations on gender equality and non-discrimination are brought into focus.
- Create and moderate sites for discussion and sharing experiences.
- Be aware of heterogeneity of gendered practices and dispositions in society. Be aware of the normativity of gender equality in European countries.
- Be aware of gender and occupational stereotypes and dare to ignore them if necessary.
- Create opportunities for non-traditional choices among the employees.

3.2   Recommendations for designers of (cross)media interventions

Public broadcasting channels can be effectively used for entertainment education campaigns that are aimed at reducing prejudices and combatting stereotypes.

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3.2.1   FOLLOW INSTITUTIONAL REGULATIONS

Be responsible in producing media content addressed (or accessible) to young people by following media recommendations in public broadcast organisations[1].

3.2.2   TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE MEDIA CONTEXT

The produced TV series appeared in the context of usual audio-visual media, filled with stereotypical approaches to gender and occupations, any social campaign has to compete with stereotypical media content.

3.2.3   APPLY CO-CREATION MODELS

Involve young people in the project design, discuss ideas with different segments of the target groups, and find out the topics that really matter to them.

3.2.4   LEARN FROM AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

Use systematically reception analysis of TV series among young people and modify your next activities according to the audience feedback.

3.2.5   CHOOSE APPROPRIATE CHANNELS

According to our experience, public TV and radio are not the best channels for reaching young audience, while they are very good for reaching middle-aged and older audience. Availability of the campaign content on YouTube and podcasts enables to widen the reach. Alternative sites (for example, impro-theatre, concerts) could be used for reaching young people with entertainment-educational messages. Ideally, co-creation possibilities would be provided, while authenticity supported in those environments.

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[1] Some examples include:
- Polacek, R. (2010). *Handbook of good practices to combat gender stereotypes and promote equal opportunities in film, television and theatre in Europe.* International Federation of Actors
- 2017 Council of Europe Recommendations on gender equality in the audiovisual media.
- Committee of Ministers (2019). Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on preventing and combating sexism
- EIGE European Institute for Gender Equality (2014). *Collection of methods, tools and good practices in the field of women and the media. Summary report.* Luxembourg. Publications Office of the European Union,
- EIGE European Institute for Gender Equality (2019). *Gender equality and youth: opportunities and risks of digitalisation.* Luxembourg. Publications Office of the European Union,
- WHO Preventing Suicide: A resource for media professionals, 2000/2008(update 2017). *Resources to educate and empower media professionals (2005 in Estonian)- The Werther and Papageno effects*

3.2.6   EMBED POSITIVE ROLE MODELS IN STORIES

In mass media campaigns educative messages are embedded in narrative storytelling. Create and present positive role models in fictional and documentary media. Tell stories of people overcoming obstacles and show possible solutions, including those that might need social and institutional support (e.g. to encourage men to take up teaching or caring careers, and women to go into STEM professions, and overcome difficulties stemming from their non-traditional choices).

3.2.7   INVOLVE CELEBRITIES IN CATALYZING THE MESSAGE

In our project some well-known actors, artists and sportsmen performed in the TV series and they were used for promotion of the product. The highly esteemed script-writer Martin Algus was awarded a prize for the best TV series script in 2019, which was an additional boost to the series. But these celebrities were not active in transmitting the campaign messages. Instead, young non-professional actors performing in the series participated in promotion tours and actively discussed the topic of gender stereotyping. The sense of authenticity that their involvement provided was extremely relevant for positive reception, however, the opportunity to involve celebrities in promoting the message was not used.

3.2.8   THINK ABOUT THE MECHANISMS OF IMPACT

Different sociological and socio-psychological theories stress the decisive role of interpersonal and group discussions as mediators of change. The experience with the project showed that group discussions were very effective means to support target group involvement. Thus,

- Produce discussion provoking content or launch catalysing discussions in the (social) media.
- Promote and moderate viewers' reflective feedback.

3.2.9   USE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO INTERVENTION

Our intervention included many different elements (fictional TV series and supporting printed and online educational materials, teacher training sessions), which complemented each other. TV series without comments and reflection could not fully realize their educational potential. Teacher training without supporting TV series where the messages were embedded in narrative form, could have remained boring. So, the complementarity and interrelation between different components of intervention is necessary. High interconnectivity characterizes cross-media interventions, multi-channel social campaigns and networks of interventions may also have desired effects if different components support each other.

3.2.10   CONSIDER THE VIABILITY OF THE PROJECT

For a sustained impact an intervention should be viable, connected to other projects with the same agenda by creating coalition of projects. Possible links to similar projects like Hypatia or Võrdne Tulevik (FB) in Estonia, or Career-rocket.eu in EU could enhance the positive effect.

Consider possibilities of follow-up projects, for example BREAK! could evolve further by producing the continuation to the TV series, elaborating on teaching materials together with high school and university students, involving teachers in producing and sharing additional teaching materials and alternative endings of the TV series, continuing teacher training courses, providing sustained support to teachers who may feel insecure teaching gender related topics elaboration of the existing teaching materials (for example, extracting relevant episodes from the series together with alternative endings to be used in teacher trainings and schools).

3.2.11   BE CULTURALLY SENSITIVE

Pay attention to peculiarities of reception among cultural minority groups: include representatives of cultural minorities in the story and avoid unnecessarily touching culturally sensitive topics or phenomena. For instance, in our project, uncensored translation of rap songs in the TV series evoked negative reaction in part of the Russian speaking audience. Try not to neglect cultural minorities in some components of the project.

3.3   Recommendations for impact assessment

3.3.1   CHOOSE YOUR APPROACHES CAREFULLY!

There is no single way to understand the social impact of a mass media multichannel campaign. There are multiple ways to gather quantitative and qualitative data concerning different levels of campaign effects – from immediate reactions of the audience in real time to long-term changes of social practices. However, considering that in-depth impact requires additional activities while long term impact will only be possible to cumulate over time and requires continuous exposure to educational and entertaining content, while the target groups are also exposed to other kinds of stimuli with same or alternative messages, measuring impact should always be done carefully and thoughtfully.

3.3.2   CONSIDER THE EFFICIENT-ENOUGH WAYS FOR TEAMWORK

Heterogeneous team, comprising members from different countries and different disciplines, as well as different genders, ages and gender dispositions is an asset as it enables to enrich each other and to learn collaboratively. Special attention should be given to teambuilding and team management. In the beginning the participants' expectations to the project and to each other should be stated explicitly, the work process should be monitored and regulated in the way that empowers all participants, and final self-reflective feedback is necessary for process evaluation from different viewpoints. On the other hand, do not over-emphasise efficiency in the creative project. Thus, consider carefully your own limits for flexibility and uncertainty, then learn those

that the team members are used to, and find a solution for planning and monitoring that is comfortable to everyone – and still supports getting the results.

3.3.3   PLAN IN ADVANCE: APPLY BEHAVIORAL APPROACH

Behavioural approach means proceeding in small steps, through validating intermediate results, and making corrections, if necessary. Pre-assessing the content and form of intervention materials from the viewpoint of the target groups and all interested groups is advisable. In our project, TV series script writer consulted the expert team members and his own children, and as a result, made many corrections in the script. Students as representatives of a target group were involved in designing cross-media products (photo exhibition, thematic notebook). In a LIFE project the method of co-creation with young people was used successfully and various additional educational materials were produced (a theatre production, educational videos and social media activation). Specificity of BREAK! project in which mass media products are accompanied by teaching materials and their probable use in school classes, any questionable solutions made in the TV series can be used as a raw material for classroom discussions, thus the mistakes can be corrected.

3.3.4   ACKNOWLEDGE, RESPECT AND DISCUSS CONTEXTUAL ENABLERS AND BARRIERS

Take into consideration processes in the socio-cultural macro-context. Gender related topics are ideologically loaded: Standing for egalitarianism, equal opportunities, social (gender) equality, respecting human rights and human dignity in everyone may become problematic in the context of rising right-wing populism with re-strengthening of gender stereotypes. Depending on the context, different styles of messages may be appropriate (for example, straightforward and simple or more nuanced and ambivalent, serious or humorous), tailored for different dispositional segments of population. Totally new strategies for promoting gender equality in the adverse macro context have been proposed (Kovats & Põim, 2015), and it is probably useful to be aware of these as well as discuss and use these in your work.

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