

Developing a campaign

What is a campaign?

The word 'campaign' has several meanings. It originates from descriptions of military manoeuvres and is still used to describe periods of military activity.

'Campaign' can also be used to describe a journey or an expedition.

Both of these definitions suggest an activity that has a starting point, a final destination and a number of milestones on the way.

What all campaigns have in common is that they have a clear goal and are limited to a specific period of time.

Sir Edmund Hilary and Tensing Norgay managed a successful campaign to reach the summit of Everest in 1953.

In the context of HIV/AIDS work a campaign is usually a time-specific, planned, co-ordinated and organised course of action designed to shift opinion, stimulate actions and/or change behaviour and attitudes.

In this context the use of the word campaign can still retain the implications of taking on a conflict or a fight. Indeed many campaigns on HIV/AIDS issues describe themselves as a 'fight' for a particular cause.

Campaigns are one of the most effective tools available to advocates of any cause.

Campaigns can be broadly categorised as: 'top down' - those initiated by institutions to influence the public; and 'bottom up' - those initiated by the public to influence institutions and/or a wider section of the public. Although in reality most campaigns, once off the ground, will combine both approaches in their delivery and often shift their emphasis during their life span.

Examples of 'top down'-initiated campaigns include state sponsored 'safer sex' health promotion campaigns. Often these campaigns are designed to help implement a new policy.

The best examples of 'bottom up'-initiated campaigns are run by organised groups, including Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), collectively known as 'civil society'. Although it is also possible for an individual to run a 'one man/woman campaign' that creates an impact. These campaigns are often designed to encourage a policy change.

Some of the best examples of 'bottom up' campaigns include politically motivated campaigns like the 'anti apartheid' campaigns of the 1980s and environmental campaigns like 'Save the Rainforest'.

Campaigns are also often linked specifically to mobilising resources or funds and are quickly organised to respond to emergencies like natural disasters. The 'Live AID'

campaign of 1985 raised millions of dollars from the general public in the West for famine relief in Ethiopia.

What makes a good campaign?

An advocacy campaign should always seek to act as a catalyst for action or a change in behaviour and attitudes.

Good campaigns use a variety of linked means, tools and tactics to articulate arguments for change or action, build momentum, create energy and engage and involve their target groups.

The challenging nature of campaigns means that they inevitably cause a degree of controversy and discomfort among some sections of society. Sometimes this will be among the politicians and opinion elites targeted by a campaign for reform.

Good campaigners exploit the way public opinion and pressure can influence both political change and shifts in cultural behaviour and practice. For a campaign to be successful it needs preparation. A comprehensive plan should be developed at the outset which includes the following elements:

- a starting point
- an achievable goal, aims and measurable objectives
- a slogan and identity
- defined target groups and settings
- key messages
- key materials
- key actions
- monitoring and evaluation
- an end point

A STARTING POINT

Establishing the rationale

Before setting campaign goals, aims and objectives and planning campaign activity it is important to ask the question 'where are we now?' and explore and describe the 'starting point', baseline or the status quo.

This description should include an outline of what needs to be changed and why. It need not be very long but it is vital in providing context for the campaign. These words establish the **rationale** for the campaign.

This will help provide a baseline to monitor success and help ensure that a clear 'map' of the campaign journey can be drawn.

Early Consensus Building

In order for the campaign to gain momentum and credibility it is crucial to get this part right. The process of finding the right words to describe the context should be as inclusive as possible.

In complex issues, like HIV and AIDS, there may often be varying opinions about how to describe the 'status quo' you are seeking to shift.

You will need to address this in the initial planning stages otherwise the campaign could fail to establish the early credibility needed to engage the range of participants vital for its success.

Identifying key stakeholders and then encouraging them to work together to agree how to describe the rationale is often the first major task of any campaign.

This can be done through workshops or brainstorming sessions or through inviting different groups to comment on early drafts of campaign plans.

Engage potential critics and develop strategies for opponents

During the preparation period remember that potential critics are stakeholders in your emerging campaign in exactly the same way that your closest allies are.

If someone is likely to have a strong opinion on your campaign then invariably they will have a vested interest and should be viewed either as a potential campaign stakeholder or a target group for the campaign.

Good campaigns develop strategies to engage or deal with their strongest potential opponents and critics.

Care needs to be taken to identify these individuals and organizations early on and develop targeted approaches for each of them.

A simple **stakeholder analysis** exercise will help ensure a strategy is developed for each interested party.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

This could be as straightforward as getting a small group of people together to list all potential stakeholders, briefly describe their interest and brainstorm one or two ways of reaching them with the campaign.

A good way to organise an effective stakeholder analysis is to set aside a whole afternoon, morning or even a full day during the earliest stages of planning the campaign.

Invite key staff members of your organization to the session alongside any key 'campaigners' already identified from select partner organizations who are likely to be closely involved in delivering the final campaign.

First of all, using a flipchart or board, you will need to compile a list of the campaign's stakeholders.

To do this if you have a rough idea of your overall goal then write this on the board. If not write something like "Who, in our area, has an interest in HIV/AIDS?"

The brainstorming session will very quickly produce a long list of groups and organizations. If the list is very long you may then want to spend a short amount of time organizing it into similar categories.

Once the lists have been compiled, take each category or group one at a time and encourage the group to brainstorm its strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities and threats posed by involving, ignoring or targeting the groups. This is a basic SWOT analysis used in planning many projects. Write the name of the organization onto the board and then divide the panel into four with the subheadings:

Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats

Under each heading describe what each might have to offer the campaign. An example is shown overleaf.

Campaign: Young people are vital in fighting HIV/AIDS

Stakeholder Group: Parents

Strengths

Close contact with their children

Sound role models

Children listen

A credible source for 'moral' info

Weaknesses

Relationships can be strained

May be uncomfortable talking about sex issues with their children

But teenagers may ignore them

Not credible 'source' for lifestyle info

Opportunities

Easy to reach children via parents

Good way to reach children

Some have good 'parenting' skills

Some media/groups exist for parents

Threats

Parents may undermine campaign messages

Bad way to reach young people

Some don't - inconsistent

Parents are a diverse group with a variety of outlooks/skills

AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL, AIMS AND MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

Once key stakeholders have agreed the wording to describe the context and rationale for a campaign then its goal, aims and objectives can be decided.

Goal

The goal needs to be **clear and ambitious**. It needs to be ambitious so as to excite the imagination of potential participants. Often the goal is the articulation of a 'dream'.

Many AIDS campaigns build on existing goals, for example the goals outlined in the Declaration of Commitment from the United Nations Special Session on HIV/AIDS in 2001 which included a goal to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015. It is often helpful to include a time frame when describing a goal.

Aims

Campaign aims help describe the way towards the 'target' or 'final destination'. While goals often articulate a dream the campaign aims should be more realistic in what they set out to achieve. They need to reassure participants that they will see progress towards the goal, and a return on their investment, if and when they get involved.

Aims can be written in any form but it is often useful to write them as short bullet points.

Objectives

Much has been written in management guides about the difference between aims and objectives. Sometimes they can appear to be very similar and it is hard to see the difference. But there should be one clear difference. An objective should be a measurable action or activity. If aims describe **where** we want to go and **what** it should look like then the objectives should help us understand **how** we will get there. Objectives should always include a verb that describes the campaign activity.

Objectives should describe how work will be organised to achieve the aims and make progress towards the goal.

The campaign goal, aims and objectives should describe in simple terms the **why, where, what, when and how** needed to deliver the campaign.

A SLOGAN AND IDENTITY

Campaigns benefit greatly from developing their own easily recognised identity to link their various parts. This usually involves developing a logo and/or a slogan.

Good slogans are **short and simple**. Often they also can be interpreted in different ways.

Keeping the same slogan for the life of the campaign provides continuity, recognition and linkages.

DEFINED TARGET GROUPS AND SETTINGS

Once the focus of the campaign has been established through developing a goal, aims, objectives and a slogan attention can be turned to people and places. In other words target groups and settings.

Good campaigns develop different strategies and approaches for the different constituent target groups identified in the stakeholder analysis.

Once targets have been defined it may be decided that the best way to reach them is through a particular setting. For example in simple terms schoolchildren can be reached through schools, workers can be reached through their workplaces and church-goers can be reached through churches.

However sometimes you will need to be more sophisticated about how and when target groups are reached.

The setting in which you approach an individual or group can influence how information is received and can in turn influence the response to the information.

This is particularly relevant to HIV/AIDS campaigning which often deals with sensitive issues that can be taboo in certain environments.

For example a campaign targeting 12-year olds with a safer sex message may decide that even though the target group regularly attends school the basic messages may not be best received in a school environment.

A school environment may encourage an inhibited response or even worse a juvenile response where the issues are not properly considered.

Instead it may be more appropriate to reach the target group through youth clubs, sporting events or internet discussion groups - environments where young people feel more at ease about expressing their feelings and exploring issues around sexuality.

Alternatively an approach that reaches young people when they are alone so they reflect on the information may be more appropriate. This could include using magazines, radio programmes or certain television programmes.

Remember that different media is consumed in different ways and by different groups. In many countries a message on television broadcast in the early evening will often reach several generations of one family sitting in the same room.

This may not be the appropriate time or place to target young adults with information about the risks of unprotected sex unless of course the objective is to encourage a family discussion on the issue!

To help establish the best ways to reach different groups **local intelligence** is needed. Where resources permit different approaches should be tested with **focus groups** to assess which generate the best result before committing to a whole campaign. A focus group is usually between five and 14 people from the target group who are encouraged to offer feedback on messages and materials.

Common target groups for HIV/AIDS campaigns include:

- the general public
- sexually active young people
- intravenous drug users
- people living with HIV/AIDS and their organizations
- National AIDS Programmes and NGOs
- workers and employers
- faith-based organizations
- health-care workers (doctors, paramedics, nurses and orderlies)
- teachers
- politicians and parliamentarians
- journalists and the media

KEY MESSAGES

Having established who is to be targeted and through which setting a campaign should then work out its key messages.

Often there are **core messages** that apply to everyone targeted in the campaign with **specific messages** developed for particular target groups.

Again to achieve maximum impact messages should be **clear, short and concise**.

KEY MATERIALS

Once key messages have been agreed they should be packaged, together with the slogan or identity to take advantage of the settings and available relevant to the various target groups.

The extent of this work depends on the resources available to a campaign.

Generally speaking a good national campaign will have a **range of materials** that will usually include posters and postcards, presentations, flyers and leaflets, fact sheets, petitions and a campaign website.

These tools can in turn be used to encourage news and media coverage of the campaign issues at no cost.

A well-funded campaign may also decide to invest in paid-for advertising in print and broadcast media - although this is a luxury for many HIV/AIDS organizations.

Many campaigns invest considerable time in forging **partnerships** to ensure they broaden their reach. For example, MTV has worked with UNAIDS since the mid 1990s on HIV/AIDS campaigns targeting young people. The most effective partnerships usually form through the production of materials to reach the campaign target groups.

Local campaigns use many of the same materials as national campaigns. If resources are limited posters, flyers and postcards are often inexpensive especially if they are handmade. Fact sheets can be photocopied at limited expense.

Local partnerships can also be effective. For example local newspapers or pharmacies are often willing to support the production and distribution of leaflets and flyers.

Other important 'materials' involve providing a human angle to the campaign issues. This is best done through **case studies**, personal testimonials and photographs. The key issue when compiling these particular campaign tools is to ensure the individuals concerned fully understand the implications of their involvement and have given written consent.

KEY ACTIONS

In addition to materials a series of campaign actions or activities should be organised for a successful campaign. A campaign should always aim to have **active participation**.

If the campaign is focused on changing opinion and attitudes an action could be something as simple as encouraging people to sign a petition or write a message of support to their Member of Parliament or similar locally elected representative.

Wearing a red ribbon as a symbol of support and solidarity is another simple action that supports HIV/AIDS campaigns.

A group activity might include a public rally or march or a fundraising event like a concert or sponsored walk.

If the campaign's focus is behavioural change linked to reducing the risk of HIV transmission an action might be obtaining condoms and using them. An activity might involve arranging a petition to pressurise a local brewery to provide condom dispensers in its bars.

Often campaign activities are planned to mark specific **milestones** that help map progress towards the campaign goal. Anniversaries of the campaign launch can be used for example – or World AIDS Day on December 1st.

RAISING CAMPAIGN FUNDS AND RESOURCES

All campaigns need resources. At the start they all need human resources to manage the planning work described so far in this guide.

As the planning moves forward a '**case**' for the campaign can be prepared.

The case – which is often simply the presentation of the emerging goal, aims and objectives - is used to encourage partners to commit resources to the campaign.

Individuals and organisations who can offer practical resources like staff, technical expertise or funding should then be identified. This can take place as part of the stakeholder analysis exercise described earlier.

Each potential contributor should be assessed as to what they might be able to bring to the campaign.

A plan to secure resources needed to deliver the campaign should then be developed to target the potential larger donors first – based on the assumption that a campaign that is already 'moving' is likely to attract greater support.

Each potential partner or donor should be asked for a **specific contribution** whether

this is an amount of money or a defined project like hosting and supporting the first few planning meetings. Simply asking for 'support' is likely to get either a negative response or a very disappointing response.

It may be a good idea to prioritise contributors who can offer some of the framework support needed for the campaign – for example you may need the early engagement of a partner asked to develop and host a campaign website.

It is essential to be able to describe the contribution of all parties so that new participants understand how they are helping the campaign grow. It is often useful to quantify all resources in money terms so that new partners can visualise for themselves what percentage of the overall campaign budget and expenditure is being asked of them.

For example an initial two week planning period involving the full time participation of five professional staff and no other resources could be quantified as an initial project start-up cost.

This amount can then be used to entice further commitment based on the assumption that it is easier to engage further support once you can demonstrate what has already been committed.

After major resources have been committed to a campaign, ongoing support for the campaign can also be pursued through various other means possibly including public appeals, telethons, direct mail campaigns, product marketing and a variety of other smaller fundraising projects.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Once a campaign plan has been developed with the elements described above it is important to think about best to monitor its activity and outcomes.

A campaign that has a well defined starting point or baseline and clearly defined measurable objectives will find the task of monitoring and evaluation easier than one which has loose objectives.

The level of evaluation will very much depend on the resources available to the campaign.

Monitoring and evaluation can take many forms and both formal and informal research should be encouraged **throughout the life span** of a campaign to inform new approaches and develop ideas.

Monitoring and evaluation is not an activity that should be left until the end of a campaign but should occur throughout the campaign.

Campaigns usually look at two different types of research as part of monitoring and evaluation: qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative research explores the emotional responses of target groups to specific elements of a campaign in some detail and is often used as a development tool. For example focus groups are often arranged to decide on the design approach of a particular advertisement or leaflet.

Quantitative research is more likely to provide formal milestones towards the campaign goal. This might include assessing how many people have been reached by the campaign or taken action as a result of the campaign at certain intervals.

Sometimes it is possible to link a campaign to **existing statistics**. For example a country may publish annual figures around new HIV infections. In this case a national campaign could very clearly set itself a target of contributing towards the reduction of

rates of new infection.

It is sometimes easier to monitor how far a campaign has reached rather than the immediate effect it has had on behaviour. Bearing this in mind, and depending on the time scale of the campaign, it might be useful to have medium term objectives that examine campaign reach and longer term objectives that examine behavioural change.

Most campaigns around health and social issues recognise that there is often a time lag between getting a message across to a target group and encouraging the group to change its behaviour or take an action.

Examples of monitoring and evaluation activity might include:

- Focus groups commenting on draft materials
- Feedback forms in campaign packs and on campaign websites
- A tally of numbers of all campaign materials distributed
- Research to show the percentage of a target group who have seen campaign materials
- Research to show percentage of a target group who can recall a campaign message
- Research to show percentage of a target group claiming to have changed behaviour or taken an action since the start of the campaign
- Total numbers of visitors to a campaign website
- Number of names on a petition
- Analysis of changes to annual rates of HIV infection since the launch
- Analysis of numbers accessing care or treatment since the launch

AN END POINT

Because of the massive challenges needed in the global response to HIV/AIDS many campaigns set themselves long term goals that they soon recognise will be difficult to reach.

The nature of HIV/AIDS means that all involved in the response have to maintain a level of optimism and hope to encourage and increase the level of action and commitment needed. Some campaigns are fortunate enough to reach their goals well within the time frames they set themselves – but this is unusual.

It is important for campaigns to be limited to a specific time period rather than continuing to pursue the same goals as inevitably the environment and context will change. They need an **end point** that is defined at the outset. At this point a new campaign may be needed with a different focus.

It is always good practice to plan to prepare a **report** on the success of a campaign. This will help inform future campaigns that plan to tackle similar issues.

The report should endeavour to acknowledge the contributions of everyone who became involved in the campaign as well as summarising the progress towards the campaign's initial goals.

FINALLY

Campaign checklist

In conclusion when developing a campaign it may be useful to use the following checklist:

Does the campaign plan include.....?

A starting point

- Does it establish the rationale?
- Does it build consensus and engage potential critics?
- Is it based on a simple stakeholder analysis?
- Is there an official launch planned?

An ambitious goal, achievable aims and measurable objectives

- Are these ambitious, clear, with realistic deliverables?
- Do they describe the why, where, what, when and how?

A slogan and identity

- Is this short and simple?
- Is there a complimentary strap line?

Defined target groups and settings

- Were all groups identified in the stakeholder analysis?
- Are the settings based on local intelligence and evaluation?
- Were messages and draft materials tested with focus groups?

Key messages

- Are they clear, short and concise?
- Are there core messages and targeted messages?

Key materials

- Are there a range of materials planned?
- Are partnerships to be used in production and distribution?
- Have you organised case studies to provide a human face to the issues?

Key actions

- Does the campaign involve active participation?
- Do activities mark specific milestones?

Raising campaign funds and resources

- Does the funding plan articulate the 'case' for the campaign?
- Are partners asked to contribute something specific?

Monitoring and evaluation

- Is monitoring and evaluation planned throughout the lifespan of the campaign?
- Will it include qualitative and quantitative research?
- Will the campaign link to existing statistics?

An end point

- When will the campaign end?
- What plans are there for a report?