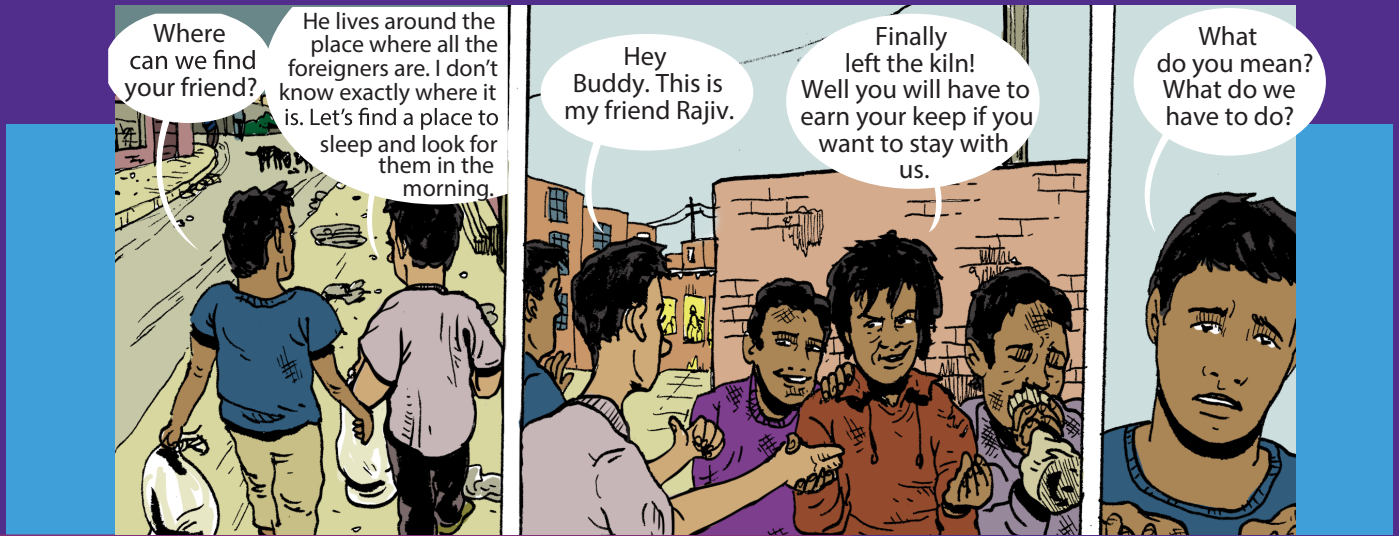


Creating an Effective Awareness Campaign: How to Design Impactful Anti-Trafficking Materials [1]



Introduction to Awareness Campaigns

Anti-trafficking efforts are increasingly relying on awareness campaigns to reduce vulnerability to human trafficking (see Figure 1). Yet there is very little empirical evidence on the tactics that are most effective when it comes to designing an awareness campaign.

The Human Trafficking and Vulnerability (HTV) study explored precisely this question in the Central and Mid-Western Region of Nepal. Through a field experiment of over 5,000 households, it examined the relative efficacy of negative (fear-based) versus positive (empowerment-based) appeals, and compared the impact of different platforms for delivering awareness campaigns that address the following outcomes:

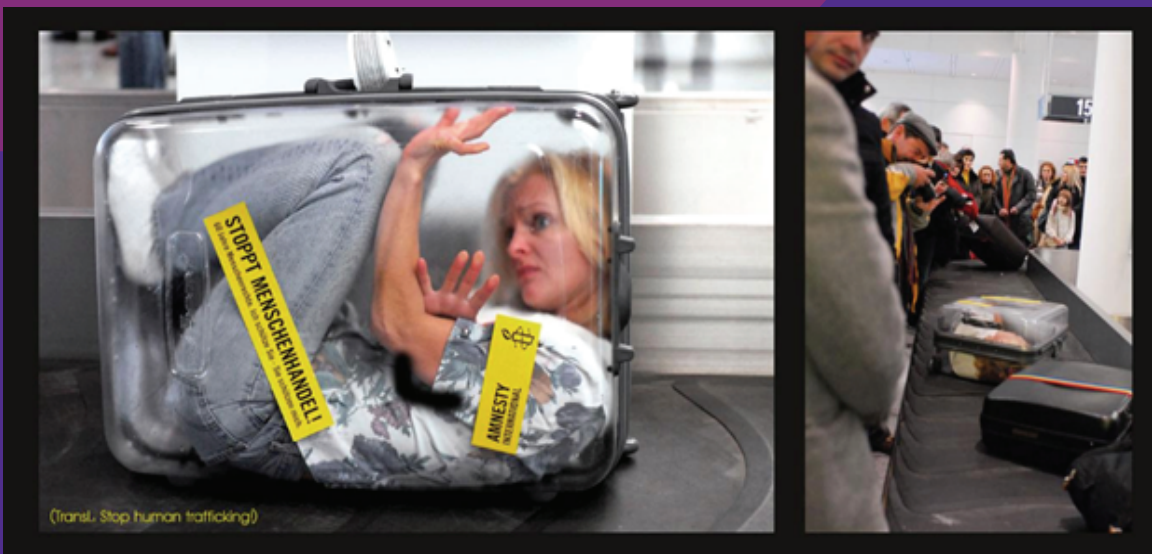
- Increasing knowledge about human trafficking
- Fostering behaviors that reduce human trafficking vulnerability
- Encouraging sympathy towards human trafficking victims
- Increasing concern for the problem

This report highlights strategies that were learned through the HTV study to maximize the effectiveness of an anti-trafficking awareness campaign. The conclusions of this report are based upon a study in Nepal only, and future

studies are necessary to assess the extent to which the conclusions about anti-trafficking awareness campaigns are generalizable to other geographic contexts.



Figure 1. Examples of anti-trafficking awareness campaigns from Nepal and around the world [2]



Left: A group of travelers look on at a real live woman in a transparent suitcase on a running baggage carousel. The performance is part of an Amnesty International anti-trafficking campaign and is designed to shock and frighten the viewer. [4]

Below: IOM's "SAFE" app is a campaign that aims to raise awareness about the risks of human trafficking.

Figure 2. Example of the 'scared straight' approach in action

Awareness campaigns come in many shapes and sizes. Some utilize a "scared straight" approach[3] that specifically aims to frighten people into changing their behavior (see Figure 2). These kinds of campaigns have been widely employed to reduce unwanted behavior such as adolescent drug use, violence, and alcohol consumption.

Other campaigns have used an alternative approach that aims to embolden individuals to take positive actions by affirming desirable behavior. These types of campaigns model appropriate behavior that seeks to empower audiences to make behavioral changes (see Figure 3).

Whether they are fear or empowerment-based, awareness campaigns are delivered through many mediums ranging from street theater performances to



Figure 3. IOM's "SAFE" Campaign: Example of an empowerment campaign [5]

radio broadcasts to graphic novels. Some use real-life or fictional stories to engage and entertain, while other focus on presenting facts about an issue without any story-telling (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Examples of different anti-trafficking campaign mediums [6]



Campaigns can encourage reporting and action, increase concern, and decrease misperceptions

Awareness campaigns can increase the likelihood that a person will recognize and report cases of human trafficking.

The HTV team experienced this first hand when, after viewing a campaign, a respondent used the hotline provided to report a case of human trafficking involving his daughter-in-law. The report resulted in the daughter-in-law's eventual rescue from India.

The study also found that in the short-term, awareness campaigns increase concern for human trafficking while decreasing misperceptions about human trafficking. Furthermore, the study found that awareness campaigns increase an individual's willingness to discuss human trafficking with family and friends, donate money to the cause, and volunteer their time to anti-trafficking efforts.

Warning: Many people do not recognize that human trafficking affects their own community even when they acknowledge that human trafficking is a major problem generally.

There is a national-local concern gap when it comes to the problem of human trafficking. The HTV study found that exposure to an awareness campaign increases people's perception that human trafficking is a significant problem nationally, but it did not increase their perception that members of their own community are at risk or could be preyed upon if they choose to migrate for work. This suggests that an effective campaign should include content that is deeply contextualized and relatable to an individual so they see themselves reflected in the messaging.

To enhance the effects of a campaign, tell powerful stories that empower the audience

The HTV study found that campaigns that use stories rather than facts and empower rather than scare the audience tend to perform better in terms of reducing victim-blaming, inspiring anti-trafficking action, increasing perceptions of risk, and increasing knowledge. This finding is consistent with other studies that test the effectiveness of radio and television dramas that use entertainment education to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. [7] What these studies show is that when a message is embedded in a powerful storyline that demonstrates individual agency, the effect will be stronger than a message that is conveyed as a laundry list of facts.



A powerful campaign tells a relatable story

To create powerful stories, it is important to develop content from the ground up. The content should draw from real-life stories, which can be curated through case worker files, media coverage, and the testimony

of trafficking survivors (see for example the quotes in Figure 5). Piloting a campaign with community and survivor groups can help reveal which images and storylines are realistic and relatable for a particular audience.



Figure 5. A live sketch of interviews with brick kiln laborers

Warning: Testimonies from survivors are powerful, but it is critical that the experience of sharing their testimonies does not introduce trauma. Discussing experiences of human trafficking can be difficult, and it should be done in a thoughtful and empowering manner. The HTV team employed a professional journalist for the interview process who created a safe and comfortable environment for the interviewee by having a counselor available for support if necessary, and by sending questions and spending time with the interviewee in advance of the interview to build rapport.

A campaign should empower the audience rather than cultivate fear

The HTV study found that empowerment messages go much further than messages that take a “scared straight” approach.

Fear-based narratives were not associated with improving an individual’s knowledge about trafficking, sympathy for trafficking victims or willingness to act. This negative effect is consistent with studies of fear-based messaging that find that in situations where the audience is unable to change their circumstances, content aimed at scaring the audience with a potential threat are often met with denial and avoidance.[8] With a complex problem such as trafficking, this reinforces

the need to complement awareness-raising with macro-level investments that provide people with more agency and choice in their everyday lives.

In contrast, empowerment narratives were associated with increasing an individual’s concern for human trafficking and their willingness to act against trafficking. This aligns with studies of suicide and HIV prevention that demonstrate that messaging oriented towards self-efficacy that models how an individual can take positive control of their lives is effective at changing behavior. [9]

Warning: Although empowerment messaging can be powerful, it should be used with caution. For example, an empowerment message can increase respondent willingness to seek out police support in combating human trafficking. In places where the police might themselves be involved in human trafficking, encouraging interaction with the police could have disastrous consequences.

The format of a campaign does not have a significant impact on its effectiveness

The HTV study found no clear winner when it comes to the effectiveness of narrative campaigns delivered in radio, video, or graphic novel format. Given that no format has an observable advantage, the most appropriate format is the one that is most accessible to the target population and is also low-cost.

In Nepal, radio is the most affordable from both a production and dissemination perspective. Given low literacy rates, radio remains the most widely accessed media format. Furthermore, purchasing airtime on the radio is relatively cheap. As such, we recommend the

use of radio narratives when carrying out awareness-raising campaigns in places like Nepal.



Invest in reminders to ensure people do not forget the awareness campaign message



Figure 6. MTV Staying Alive's SHUGA: Example of investing in longevity

The HTV study found that the initial effects of awareness campaigns are not evident six to eight months after initial exposure. To ensure the longevity of a campaign's impact, it makes sense to consider investing in reminders.

For radio or video campaigns, this could involve designing short public service announcements to remind the audience of campaign takeaways, or rebroadcasting a campaign entirely at a later date. Another way to increase campaign durability is to

serialize it. For example, serialized television dramas such as MTV Staying Alive's Shuga, a narrative drama aimed at reducing gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS, has been celebrated by the World Bank for increasing HIV testing amongst youth in Nigeria (see Figure 6).[10] Print materials can also make effective reminders. Public posters or leaflets can reinforce a campaign message or draw individuals back to material such as a graphic novel that may have been provided to individuals in communities during the initial campaign.

Caveats

Campaigns are not enough

Anti-trafficking awareness campaigns are not a silver bullet. By themselves, they cannot solve human trafficking, which is a multifaceted problem whose causes include the interaction of structural factors (such as economic deprivation, market downturns, social inequality, attitudes towards women, and demand for sex workers) and proximate factors (such as lax national and international legal regimes, weak law enforcement corruption, organized criminal entrepreneurship, and low levels of education about human trafficking).

Generalizability

The data upon which this report is based was collected in Nepal. Results are not necessarily generalizable to other countries. Replication studies in other places would help ascertain the extent to which the results presented here should

- While awareness campaigns can increase knowledge, and encourage behaviors that reduce vulnerability to human trafficking, they do not alter the economic, political, and social context in which individuals make decisions. As such, when choosing to use awareness-raising as an anti-trafficking tool, education campaigns should be considered alongside other investments that aim to transform the structural and proximate factors that increase vulnerability.

shape decisions about how to design anti-trafficking campaigns in other political, social, and economic environments.

Footnotes

- [1] For more information on the study on which this report is based, please see the following report: Archer, Dan, Margaret Boittin, and Cecilia Hyunjung Mo. 2016. "Reducing Vulnerability to Human Trafficking: An Experimental Intervention Using Anti-Trafficking Campaigns to Change Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs, and Practices in Nepal." Research and Innovation Grants Working Paper Series, USAID, August 26 (Available at: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00MBT4.pdf).
- [2] Image 1: A poster campaign in Nepal (www.maitinepal.org); Image 2: A billboard campaign in Seattle, USA (Mayor Mike McGinn | Flickr); Image 3: A Campaign from the Ohio State Human Trafficking Task force (<http://humantrafficking.ohio.gov/>)
- [3] According to The Guardian, the phrase 'scared straight' dates to the 1978 documentary of the same name that depicted convicts sharing graphic and violent details of their past crimes and life in jail with juvenile offenders. The phrase is now commonly used to describe awareness-raising programs across the United States that use fear appeals to scare youth away from certain behaviors such as drinking and driving and violence (<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/oct/17/gun-violence-youth-prevention-scared-straight-new-york-it-starts-here>). Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E), a widely-used campaign that aims to reduce adolescent drug use, is another example of a popular 'scared straight' program. More information on this program can be found at their website: <https://www.dare.org/>.
- [4] <http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/america-tonight/articles/2015/6/4/in-philadelphia-10000-teens-re-live-shooting-victims-final-moments.html>
- [5] Kiss and Tell is a campaign that aims to prevent the spread of HIV by encouraging men who have sex with men to discuss their sexual health status. For more information, visit: <http://www.gmhc.org/about-us/publications/hiv-prevention-and-testing-campaigns-/kiss--tell>.
- [6] The top image is a street theatre program organized by Women Empowerment Organization for International Women's Day 2017 in Kathmandu (<http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2017-03-10/street-drama-marks-womens-day.html>); the bottom image is an anti-trafficking poster from the International Organization for Migration (<https://www.iom.int/newsdesk/20170608>)
- [7] W. Vaughan, Everett M. Rogers, Arvind Singhal, Ramadhan M. Swalehe, Peter. 2000. "Entertainment-Education and HIV/AIDS Prevention: A Field Experiment in Tanzania." *Journal of Health Communication* 5 (sup1): 81–100; Farr, A. Celeste, Kim Witte, Kassa Jarato, and Tiffany Menard. 2005. "The Effectiveness of Media Use in Health Education: Evaluation of an HIV/AIDS Radio Campaign in Ethiopia." *Journal of Health Communication* 10 (3): 225–235; Goldstein, Susan, Shereen Usdin, Esca Scheepers, and Garth Japhet. 2005. "Communicating HIV and AIDS, What Works? A Report on the Impact Evaluation of Soul City's Fourth Series." *Journal of Health Communication* 10 (5): 465–483.
- [8] Witte, Kim. 1992. "Putting The Fear Back Into Fear Appeals: The Extended Parallel Process Model." *Communication Monographs* 59 (December): 329–349; Witte, Kim, Gary Meyer, and Dennis Martell. 2001. *Effective Health Risk Messages: A Step-By-Step Guide*. SAGE.
- [9] For example: Jenner, Eric, Lynne Woodward Jenner, Maya Matthews-Sterling, Jessica K. Butts, and Trina Evans Williams. 2010. "Awareness Effects of a Youth Suicide Prevention Media Campaign in Louisiana." *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 40 (4): 394–406; Goldstein, Susan, Shereen Usdin, Esca Scheepers, and Garth Japhet. 2005. "Communicating HIV and AIDS, What Works? A Report on the Impact Evaluation of Soul City's Fourth Series." *Journal of Health Communication* 10 (5): 465–483.; W. Vaughan, Everett M. Rogers, Arvind Singhal, Ramadhan M. Swalehe, Peter. 2000. "Entertainment-Education and HIV/AIDS Prevention: A Field Experiment in Tanzania." *Journal of Health Communication* 5 (sup1): 81–100.
- [10] <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2017/02/23/mtv-shuga-soap-opera-turns-edutainment-into-a-tool-to-fight-hiv-and-gender-based-violence>
- [11] Cameron, Sally, and Edward Newman. 2008. *Trafficking in Humans Social, Cultural and Political Dimensions*. New York: United Nations University Press.

Margaret Boittin, Cecilia Hyunjung Mo, and Sarah Rich-Zendel are the authors of this report. The infographic was designed by Seung Yong Lee.

***For more information on this study please see the following report, Reducing Vulnerability to Human Trafficking: An Experimental Intervention Using Anti-Trafficking Campaigns to Change Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs, and Practices in Nepal: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00MBT4.pdf.

***Research support for this project was provided by the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies (FSI) at Stanford University, the Hoover Institute at Stanford University, Humanity United, the Institute of International Education (IIE), Terre des Hommes (TDH), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United States Department of Labor (DOL), Latin American Public Opinion Project at Vanderbilt University.

***The content of this report was made possible in part with support from the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the sole responsibility of Vanderbilt University and do not reflect the views of USAID; the United States Government; or the Democracy Fellows and Grants Program implementer, IIE. This material also does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of Labor, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the United States Government.

***This report is made possible with support of Humanity United. The contents are the sole responsibility of Vanderbilt University and do not reflect the views of Humanity United.