

Section 6

Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Materials and Events

Introduction

Effective Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials are an important component of the comprehensive HIV education campaign you will implement with the help of *The Road to Good Health* toolkit.

This section highlights some of multiple channels you can use to disseminate information about HIV, to reinforce what people already know, and to contribute to changing attitudes and behaviors.

An IEC campaign cannot be effective alone. Other components of your strategy should include face-to-face education (see Sections 3-6 for curricula) and helping people know how to access condoms and other services focusing on prevention, care and treatment.

You will find that the most effective IEC materials are relevant and tap into interests of the local population. In addition, effective materials are clear, communicate specific messages, and are easily remembered.

As noted earlier, you should conduct a needs assessment before starting an IEC campaign. This will provide important information about your target populations and the kinds of materials people will respond to. For example, in contexts that are ethnically diverse, or where people are not literate, you will want to use highly visual materials to reduce the need for text.

In all cases, it is important to identify trainers and peer leaders who speak local languages and, ideally, are from the target populations. These individuals will also be the most effective at adapting the IEC materials and the training session plans for local populations.

You may find that in culturally and/or religiously conservative contexts it is considered inappropriate to display information about anything that has a relationship to sex. In these situations, it is often possible to identify local persons who are highly respected in their communities but also willing to open doors to taboo subjects. These “positive deviants” can often achieve astonishing results by introducing ideas, activities and materials an outsider or less respected person would not be able to do.

In the same way, although some materials are developed within a particular country context, they may find ready acceptance in another country if introduced. Engaging the right members of the community in identifying what materials will work will save time and money.

IEC Materials are most effective when they reflect the interests and preferences of the local population.

Selecting Materials for Your Campaign

Ideally there should be sufficient exposure to IEC materials to reinforce the following:

- Basic facts about HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)
- HIV prevention (including use of condoms)
- Counseling and testing
- Anti-stigma messages
- Women’s and human rights

Developing Program-Specific Materials

You will find that the most effective materials are those that are created in collaboration with target populations. As noted in the Trainer’s Guide of *The Road to Good Health* (Section 1), while the material development process may seem complex, program coordinators have time and again found the benefits of the entire process justify the effort spent working through each step.

Identifying Materials for Use

If time and budget do not allow you to develop your materials locally, a second-best strategy is to identify effective materials already being produced by Ministries of Health, United Nations (UN) agencies, and international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). A list of international resources is provided for you, along with some country-specific resources, in Section 7: Other Resources.

Road to Good Health Materials

The Road to Good Health toolkit includes a brochure and three leaflets designed for your campaign. Samples of these are provided in the toolkit and on the CD Rom you will find included.

The brochure targets the following audiences and may be appropriate for others as well:

- World Bank Task Team leaders
- Government counterparts
- Contractors with bidding documents

You should provide the leaflets to each worker when they start work, and they can be distributed to community residents and sex workers.

These cover:

- Correct male condom use (ideally one for female condoms would also be created)
- Counseling and testing
- Women and human rights

Road to Good Health materials should be provided to workers when they are first employed.

IEC Materials and Activities

You should use a range of materials, activities, and approaches as part of an IEC campaign. It is important that individuals have some materials they can reference privately. In addition, you will promote social awareness and community change by putting posters and other visuals in public places.

Some of the approaches you can use include the following that will be discussed below:

- Printed materials
- Mass media
- Giveaways (including condoms)
- Community awareness events
- Innovative ideas

Printed Materials

Use printed materials to post information in public places, as teaching aids, or to provide information to individuals.

These materials include:

- Brochures
- Posters
- Wall calendars

- Playing cards
- Billboards
- Advertisements (posted on public transport vehicles, for example)
- Murals
- Desktop flip charts (for one-on-one and small group education)
- Other materials

Mass Media

Many construction workers and community residents report that television, radio and the use of DVDs/VCDs is the best form of educational medium. Programs can include short 30 to 60 second public service announcements promoting condoms or counseling and testing, short five to ten minute mini-dramas, docu-dramas that range from 25 to 60 minutes, as well as taped musical and theatrical productions. These can be shown on television, broadcast on radio or shown as a VCD/DVD.

Television, radio and DVDs/VCDs are among the most Effective outreach tools.

There are many venues where you can show VCDs and DVDs including:

- Waiting areas at health clinics or other places people gather
- Public transportation sites, either while waiting to board or en route on buses, ferries, trains, etc.
- Evening entertainment venues
- Construction worker dormitories
- Places of entertainment, such as karaoke bars and beer shops. Showing of VCDs can be accompanied by in-person entertainment, questions and answers with prizes, etc.
- Print media, i.e. newspapers, magazines
- Broadcast media, i.e. television, radio
- DVDs/VCDs

Other mass media ideas that have been used successfully include:

- Billboards
- Murals

Giveaways

People love “giveaways,” including those listed below and more. It is important to evaluate costs and benefits to determine the value gained from these. If there is a strong visual message associated with the items being given away, and the items are put into use, messages can quickly become integrated into community life.

- Condoms
- Pens and pencils
- T-shirts
- Caps
- Key chains
- Playing cards
- Other items

Community Awareness Events

World AIDS Day is December 1st.

World AIDS Day is a perfect opportunity to hold awareness activities. These may be community-wide or focus on gathering a more targeted group of people. However, these events can be held any day of the year. Some examples of activities:

- Community Awareness Day—Use of a central venue with a stage for entertainment and room for NGOs, public health agencies, and others to provide information, giveaways, and even counseling & testing.
- Fun Day—a day for employees and, if applicable, their families, with games and fun as well as informational tables and demonstrations related to HIV
- Goody bag distribution—employers can distribute small bags with condoms and information about HIV, as well as other giveaways, and candy or a piece of fruit.
- Voluntary counseling and testing day—a speaker from a counseling and testing center provides information about C&T, followed by leaders and others publicly signing up for testing.
- Rallies can be held to promote awareness of specific issues, for example issues relating to stigma and discrimination. A panel of people living with HIV should be part of this.
- Bike-a-thons and walk-a-thons can raise awareness and/or be used to raise funds for persons affected by HIV or AIDS.
- An event for sex workers might include a sponsored “self-care” day with an opportunity for health-screening and something relaxing and fun.
- World AIDS Day (December 1) events
- Musical concerts, theatrical performances
- Health fairs
- Walk-a-thons, bike-a-thons, etc.

Innovative Ideas

Text messaging/short message service is an inexpensive and quick way to reach a target population that uses mobile phones.

There are many other innovative IEC methods you can use to reach target groups. A few examples follow:

- Text messaging/Short message service (SMS)—Some groups have used text messaging/SMS where members of target populations have mobile phones. This is an inexpensive, easy-to use, and quick form of direct communication you can use to reach many people all at once. Your list of recipients might include all construction workers, all drivers, a network of sex workers, and so on. Messages might include basic facts about HIV (“condoms prevent HIV and STI transmission”), motivational messages (“don’t forget to keep condoms available”), or messages targeting male norms and values (“strong workers respect women and never use physical force”).
- Email—in a similar way to text messaging information can be provided through email for those groups who have access to and use the internet.

New ideas you might explore:

- Puzzles—with messages relating to HIV. Perhaps construction workers would enjoy putting together a puzzle as a form of evening entertainment.
- Condom holders—design a condom holder, similar to small coin holders, as a way to keep condoms

both private and protected. These might be from leather or a local material. If the design is successful the production of these could be a micro-enterprise project for women or men in the community. *The Road to Good Health* logo could be on the front.

In order to reach the families or relatives of migrant workers, back in their home communities, you may consider developing postcards conveying positive images and messages, for migrant workers to use to write home.

Sample IEC Materials

On the following pages are samples of effective IEC materials gathered from field visits to China, Cambodia, Viet Nam, and Lao PDR. These are meant to provide you with an idea of the range of materials you might use as part of a campaign. For details about how to design an effective IEC campaign see above and Section 1.