

# NGO AND MEDIA

ERASMUS +

## STEPS4LIFE PROJECT

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### TRAINING FOR TRAINERS

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# **THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA TO THE WORK OF NGO'S**

**Mass media are channels used to communicate information to large groups of people.**

**By regularly conveying information to important audiences, the media plays a large role in shaping public debate.**

**The media are among the most important allies to the NGO community.**

**Establishing good relationships with journalists is an integral part of any effective media outreach campaign.**

# WRITING ARTICLES IN MEDIA COULD:

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Create an environment of political pressure

Convey general information, serving as a public education tool

Counter popular misconceptions

Comment on an issue, providing an alternative viewpoint

# **HOW TO ESTABLISH MEDIA CONTACTS**

**A good first step is to make a list of the newspaper, radio and/or television media outlets with which you would like to establish a relationship.**

**These are your target media contacts.**

**Research what kind of stories your target media contacts cover.**

# **HOW TO ESTABLISH MEDIA CONTACTS**

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**Pay close attention and try to identify one or two journalists who regularly write stories relevant to the subject matter of your media outreach campaign.**

**Once you've done this basic homework, call your target media contacts. Be prepared to introduce yourself and your organization, and to position yourself as a resource to that journalist.**

# **HOW TO ESTABLISH MEDIA CONTACTS**

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**Direct journalists to web sites and other resources that provide background information relevant to your issue.**

**Keep a comprehensive database of journalist contacts once you've established them.**

# **HOW TO ESTABLISH MEDIA CONTACTS**

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**To avoid frustrating your journalist contacts, contact them only in regards to your most urgent communications.**

**Respect journalists' deadlines.**

**Understand the responsibilities of journalism. Ethics, credibility and impartiality are the three keys to responsible journalism.**

## **CHECKLIST FOR ESTABLISHING GOOD MEDIA CONTACTS**

**Identify your audience. Are you targeting the general public? Policy makers? A local audience? A national audience? An issue-friendly audience? An issue-hostile audience?**

**Research media outlets that cater to your audience.**

**Research who the appropriate journalist contact(s) will be.**



## **CHECKLIST FOR ESTABLISHING GOOD MEDIA CONTACTS**

**Contact the media outlet.**

**Be polite.**

**Explain the purpose of your call.**

**Lay the foundations for future contact with the journalist.**

**Follow up. If the journalist has given you his/her email address, fax number or mailing address, send him/her a quick note of thanks.**

# **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

## **A. Identify Your Media Outreach Strategy & Goals**

**Are your core messages proactive: introducing a subject or story idea to the news media for the first time; or whether your core messages are reactive: responding to previous news coverage.**

**Examples of proactive media outreach include: a call for governments to take action:**

# **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

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## **A. Identify Your Media Outreach Strategy & Goals**

**Examples of reactive media outreach include: A letter to the editor of a newspaper highlighting a popular misconception or factual error cited in earlier reporting by that newspaper.**

# **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

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## **B. Creating a Core Message**

**When planning a media strategy, it is important to develop a clear and specific message. The message should be developed to include:**

**The situation the campaign is addressing**

**The solution the group proposes**

**The action that the public can take to help solve the problem**

# **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

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## **B. Creating a Core Message**

**The campaign's message and its three parts (problem, solution, action) should be featured in every article, interview and conversation conducted during the course of the campaign.**

**The core message should also reflect the overall mandate of your organization, and reflect your organization's central mission and goals.**

**When planning a media strategy, it is important to identify your target audience.**

# **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

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## **C. Framing the Message**

### **Talking Points:**

**Talking points summarize your media campaign's central message in three or four sentences, offering a clear summary of all the points the NGO will present throughout the campaign.**

**This summary should include the basic persuasive argument and statistics or facts to support the message.**

## **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

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### **Sound Bites:**

**Sound bites are shorter than talking points and encapsulate the message in words and symbols that will grab the audience's attention.**

**Sound bites are useful for print interviews, but are especially important for broadcast media.**

# **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

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## **D. Timing the Message**

**Here are a few timing issues to consider:**

**Relate Your Story to Breaking News or Current Events**

**Make your story relevant to journalists by tying in your story to breaking news or current events. Show the media that your issue is current and relates to today's news discussions and you'll have a much better chance of convincing journalists that your story is newsworthy.**



## **PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

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### **D. Timing the Message**

#### **Use a Special Occasion / Key Date**

Identify key dates on which your issue will take on special meaning and work on raising of the significance of that date. For example, a well-organized calendar of events can help you and journalists determine when to focus attention on your story.

#### **Avoid Busy News Days**

# **DELIVERING YOUR CAMPAIGN TO THE MEDIA**

## **A. The Press Release / Media Advisory / Press Statement**

**A press release is a common technique for presenting information to the media.**

**It is often used to break news, spread information, publicize a story, condemn actions and state your organization's mandate.**

# THE PRESS RELEASE

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The central components that every press release must include :

Your organization's name and logo, the date

Contact information of experts for further information

A headline that reflects the main message

A sub-headline that adds a second, forward-looking theme

A lead paragraph that explains the problem and gives key information

A background paragraph that gives the context to the problem

At least one quote from an expert on the subject

A suggested solution and a call for action

A brief organizational description ( a mini-mission statement at the end of the document)

# **PRESS RELEASE TIPS**

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**Timing is everything. Press releases should coincide with the media outlets schedule.**

**Releases should be sent so that they arrive before a paper or station's daily editorial meeting**

**Pitch the story. Make use of your media contacts by calling a handful of the most important journalists to let them know about the press release.**

**If press releases are sent too often, media pay less attention.**

# PREPARING FOR A MEDIA INTERVIEW

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## *Research:*

Who will be the interviewer?

What is the topic of the interview? Where will it take place?

When will the story be used? How long will the interview be?

What kind of stories the interviewer has done in the past?

# PREPARING FOR A MEDIA INTERVIEW

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## *Prepare:*

What core message do you want to convey through the interview?

What new relevant information can you put forward?

Think about statistics or other examples to support your core message.

## *Practice:*

Be ready to answer questions that may be difficult or uncomfortable for you or your organization.

Practice what you want to say and how you want to say it.

# DURING AN INTERVIEW

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Keep in mind that reporters may have their own agenda.

The key to being successful in communications with the media is to satisfy the need for information while using your message to help shape the story.

Use "Bridging" to Convey the Message

Even if the reporter does not ask questions specifically about your key message, you can use "bridging" to create a link to your issue.

# **DURING AN INTERVIEW**

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**Remember the 4 C's: Conversational, Concise,  
Clear, Convincing**

**Give good quotes - have sound bites ready**

**Speak clearly**

**Avoid jargon and technical terms**

**Be persuasive**

**Don't worry about a silent pause**



# **DURING AN INTERVIEW**

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**Be honest. Don't exaggerate.**

**If you are unsure of an answer, offer to follow-up with information or tell the audience where they can go to find more information.**

**Build verbal bridges to get you key message across.**

**If you have not said all you want near the close of the interview, look for a way to fit it in.**

# **PRESS CONFERENCE**

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**Press conferences are formal, arranged meetings held with members of the press at which the organizer usually offers a statement and then answers questions from journalists.**

**A press conference can be successful only if members of the media will report on it.**

**Bear in mind that the press conference is for the benefit of journalists.**

# **PRESS CONFERENCE - AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE**

**Reserve a venue**

**Arrange for a podium, chairs, and, possibly, food and drinks for reporters**

**Schedule a time: (This should be based on deadlines of media outlets that will cover the event.)**

**Prepare an announcement of the press conference.**

**Include the briefing topics and speakers, explaining the speakers' expertise on the topic.**

**Send out announcements by fax, mail or hand deliver to: editors, assignment editors, reporters, national wire services, weekly calendars/bulletins, allies and supporters**

## **PRESS CONFERENCE - AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE**

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**Prepare written material for the conference, including press kits with a briefing agenda, speaker bios and any other relevant documents**

**Prepare an outline of talking points and share them with the speakers. Make sure the speakers understand their talking points so that there is no overlap during the presentation.**

## **PRESS CONFERENCE - AT LEAST ONE DAY BEFORE**

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**Contact the speakers to review the order of presentations and talking points**

**Contact members of the media to remind them of the press conference**

**Arrange materials, including extra copies to send journalists who do not attend**

**Visit the venue for the press conference to make sure details are in order**

# **THE DAY OF THE CONFERENCE**

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**Issue a press release that contains the main message of the press conference**

**Make last-minute calls to assignment desks and editors**

**Check on the venue several hours before the conference starts**

**Review the order and talking points of the press conference with speakers while they are all together**

# **DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE**

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**Have a sign-up sheet to get the names and addresses of reporters**

**Distribute press kits and your business card**

**Give reporters a written list of participants**

**Make opening remarks, introduce speakers**

**Arrange the necessary one-on-one interviews and follow-up interviews**

**Record the conference so that it can be reviewed later**

**Take pictures for in-house use**

# **PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOW UP**

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**Send press kits to reporters who did not attend**

**Call reporters who did not attend but seemed interested**

**Monitor media coverage to see how the press conference was reported**

**Clip newspaper and other coverage of the event**



# **BROADCAST MEDIA - RADIO AND TELEVISION**

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**Broadcast media are distinct from print formats because they can reach larger and more diverse populations, including those who have low literacy levels or who live in isolated areas.**

**Within the realm of broadcast media there are a wide variety of formats which include, news and feature programs, television and radio talk shows, individual radio programs, paid advertising and public service announcements.**

# TIPS FOR BROADCAST MEDIA

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Bring talking points that you want to be sure to emphasize during the interview.

Be prepared to state your name, title and the organization you represent.

Remember that your audience may not be familiar with your issue. Provide basic information to put your comments in context.

Answer questions on a priority basis starting with the question that you think is most important.

# TIPS FOR BROADCAST MEDIA

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- Present a human picture; tell what has happened to a specific person.
- Provide numbers and statistics that help tell your story.
- Speak slowly and clearly. Avoid using unnecessary words, such as "like" or "um".
- Make short, precise statements. Use your talking points.
- Always be calm and polite, even when challenged.
- Always tell the truth. Lying, even a little bit, damages credibility.













