EXECUTING MEDIA ACTIVITIES: A HOW-TO GUIDE was developed in partnership with the Global Health Advocacy Incubator at the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

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Executing Media Activities: A How-To Guide

A strategic and well-executed media campaign can play a major role in whether you achieve your advocacy objectives. Consistent media coverage that positions your issue appropriately to target audiences can raise visibility, build support and drive people to action.

To be successful your media activities must be aligned with your campaign’s overall goals, timing, and target audiences. By now, you should have identified your target audiences and captured objectives in the media action plan. You also have selected your media tactics (see Selecting Media Tactics tool) based on those objectives and target audiences, the timing of your campaign activities, and your organization’s human resource and financial capacity.

Now it’s time to execute those tactics in a way that maximizes impact. That means creating and disseminating communications pieces for the press or social media. This tool will provide you with the good practice guidelines for specific communications tactics so you can ensure your message is being heard by those you are trying to reach.

Preparing and Disseminating a Press Release

WRITING YOUR PRESS RELEASE.

Make it newsworthy.

When preparing a press release, it’s important to remember that you will only be effective if you give the media a reason to cover your issue. Think creatively about what will make your announcement “newsworthy” to journalists and editors, while still allowing you to communicate your key messages. One way to do this effectively is to identify newsworthy key dates, events, reports, etc., for example, UN World Days - that are already recognized by the media. When possible, link your campaign to these newsworthy angles, while still incorporating your messages into the release.

Follow the standard, accepted format.

There is an accepted format for press releases, and you’ll get the best response from the media if you fol-
DISSEMINATING YOUR PRESS RELEASE

Once your press release is drafted, you need to decide where to send it. You should have your media contact registry up to date (see Media Contact Registry tool) so you can easily identify the journalists most likely to be interested in your news. It’s a good idea to share your release widely, but you can also personalize the release for journalists who are high priority. For those individuals, personalize the email greeting and add a note in the email that includes a reference to their interest in the topic.

The time of day that you send out your press release is also important. Send out your press release in the morning so that journalists have time to file story before evening deadline. Use email to send the release, but follow up with selected journalists via phone to ensure they don’t overlook your release.

PRESS RELEASE

CHILD RIGHTS & HEALTH EXPERTS WANT GOVT TO PASS A STRONG ROAD SAFETY LAW TO SAVE YOUNG LIVES

Bengaluru, 18 May, 2016: The state and central governments should wake up to the increasing number of road deaths involving youngsters. The Government of India should take strong steps to pass and implement comprehensive and stringent road safety law to protect millions of lives in this regard. – This is what the child rights and health experts, who met in city on Wednesday, had to demand.

In a press conference organized by the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) in association with the Institute of Public Health (IPH), a health NGO and Red Cross Society, experts said 20 children are killed every day in India due to road crashes.

Dr. Kripa Alva, head of KSCPCR said the state of Karnataka, which happens to be the fourth worst state for number of road deaths in the country, also accounts for considerable number of children deaths in road accidents. “But with stronger legislations things can be changed both in the state and nationally. To save the lives of children and the productive youth of our nation we must act now. We urge the government of India to pass and implement a comprehensive and stringent road safety law to protect millions of young lives,” she added.

Dr. Pragati Hebbar, Advocacy Officer, IPH said in the past decade about 1 million people have died and over 5 million people have been injured or disabled due to road crashes. “The figures of road crashes and deaths are alarming and lots need to be done to curb this preventable cause of death and morbidity to prevent a huge drain on Indian economy. Road crashes are estimated to cause a loss of 3% of our GDP,” she added.

Mr. S Ashok Kumar Shetty, the General Secretary of the Karnataka chapter of the Red Cross highlighted that the Karnataka government has taken several positive steps such as Harish Scheme, Bike Ambulances, and notifying state road safety policy, mandating helmet use for pillion rider and providing schemes for medical relief to road crash victims. “Having set a positive example, it would be apt to see Karnataka government now urging for and supporting comprehensive legislation on road safety at national level,” he added.

Noted Spine Surgeon Dr. Subodh Shetty also participated in the event and said all the stakeholders should work hard to bring in a very comprehensive and stringent national road safety law and the same should be stressed at an upcoming high-level meeting of union ministers of various state governments in Bengaluru in coming days.

The above mentioned health experts have written a letter highlighting the important points of road safety, to Karnataka transport minister B Ramalinga Reddy and Yoonus Khan, Chairman, Group of Ministers constituted to examine best practices in road safety and road transport sector.

We request you to publish this news and photographs in your esteemed media.

For further details contact: Dr. Pragati Hebbar 9739719991.

Media contact: Praveen Rao S – 9916796559.
Creating a Leave Behind

A “leave-behind” is a printed communications piece that supplements an event or a meeting and provides your key messages, data and call to action to leave with participants after the in-person event has concluded. A successful leave-behind attractively and succinctly presents the key information you want the target audience to remember about your issue, including:

- The **problem** you are trying to address
- Key **statistics or data** on the issue
- Easy to understand background **information**
- An **infographic**, if appropriate
- Your **solution** to the problem
- A strong **call to action**
- **Contact information**

It’s critical to include the solution and your specific call to action in your leave behind. If the media only understand your problem, without the accompanying solution and action that needs to be taken, they might cover your story inaccurately, or even in a way that undercuts your advocacy objectives. For example, during the course of a policy campaign to pass more stringent speeding laws, you might prepare a leave behind on the importance of reducing speeds around schools. If you neglect to include a call to action that focuses on new legislation, resulting media reports could easily interpret the only solution as a need for drivers to be more wary when driving, and ignore the issue of legislation entirely.

By the time you create a leave behind, you should have already developed key messages. However, it’s important that these messages are modular and can be easily customized to your specific audience for the leave behind. For instance, if your overall campaign is on broader road safety legislation, but your event is focused on child safety, it’s helpful to create a leave behind that includes messaging and data focused on road safety, children and that specific policy ask.

### BENEFITS OF THE CAMBODIAN PASSENGER HELMET LAW

Join us to call for the government to enforce the passenger helmet law immediately.

The passenger helmet law was officially promulgated in January 2015, but it has not yet been enforced.

![Graph showing passenger helmet use rates increase from 7% to 55% in 2015 and increase by 5% each following year.](image)

**If the law is effectively enforced by 2015...**

- **The majority of victims are MOTORCYCLISTS,** of whom suffer from head injury.
- **Disturbingly,** only motorcycle driver helmet use, **NOT passenger or child helmet use,** is legally enforced.

- The passenger helmet law was officially promulgated in January 2015, but it has not yet been enforced.

- **We expect passenger helmet use rates to increase from 7% to 55% in 2015 and increase by 5% each following year.**

- **THE EFFECTS ARE LIFE-SAVING AND ECONOMICALLY NECESSARY.**

  - By the end of 2020 an estimated:
    - 561 lives will be saved.
    - 10,574 head injuries prevented.
    - **$98,618,422** US Dollars saved.

- **Join us to call for the government to enforce the passenger helmet law immediately.**

- **Each day we wait, 6 more lives will be lost.**

- **Strong support from the government, the police, and stakeholders is essential to reach 80% passenger helmet use rate saving millions of dollars & immeasurable sorrow.**

- **By 2020,**

Please visit us online to pledge your support. www.saferoads.org.kh
Opinion Editorial (“Op-ed”)

Op-eds are an opportunity to make the case for your issue in a print or online publication. Op-eds differ from a leaf behind as they are written in a journalistic style, framed to be newsworthy and published in a media outlet.

To craft a compelling op-ed, you need a link between your campaign and a current event. This event may be internal - for example, a campaign event - or external, such as the first day of school if you are focusing on child safety. While the main focus of the op-ed should be on your key messages, lead with the broader context so audiences understand why the piece is relevant to them and why they should continue reading.

In the course of the piece, make sure you clearly define the problem, why it matters to the audience, and the solution. Support this argument with a few compelling data points. You can also make your op-ed more compelling by working with a well-known and credible key stakeholder or opinion leader to publish the piece under their name, which can lend more credibility to the article. It is important to include direct quotes from one or more key opinion leaders that support your argument and messages. For example, if a MP has recently talked about the need to address deaths from road crashes, quote this and then link it to the need for your policy or better enforcement.

Following the format required by the outlet you’re writing for will also increase your chances of publication. Make sure that you check their guidelines for length and format before drafting and submitting the piece.

A newspaper article from Handicap International in Kenya calling for reduced speeds around schools
Blog Post

Blog posts are a relatively new format for media advocacy. They can be internal (posted on your organization's website or blog roll) or external (posted on another organization's or news outlet's website or blog roll). Blogs have several advantages over other communication tactics. Blog posts can provide an opportunity to explain elements of your campaign without the strict editorial constraints and guidelines of traditional media outlets. They are also easily amplified by social media through audience actions like sharing, retweets and commenting.

You can also use published blog posts to attract journalists to your issue, so it is important to follow some basic blogging guidelines:

■ Whenever possible, link your blog post to a recent campaign development or call to action. That could include a report release, a major event, or a link to sign a petition or contact a decision-maker.

■ Try to include quotes from stakeholders, leaders in your organization, or those affected by your issue. Take advantage of the informal format—tell a story that profiles the human impact of your issue, share photos or videos from the field, ask questions of your readers—keep content interesting and engaging!

■ Use social media to increase the reach of your blog. After your blog is posted, identify a handful of compelling points or visuals from the blog that can be repurposed as social media posts. Ideally, choose quotes and images from the blog that will catch the attention of audiences— for example, a quote from an official or a compelling or surprising data point.

■ Explore opportunities to post your blog content on multiple websites! This is called ‘cross-posting’. It is a good idea to reach out to allied organizations and news content websites (ex. Huffington Post) to ask if your content can be featured as a ‘guest blogger’.

Why Reducing Speeds Is Key to Improving Traffic Safety
By Dario Hidalgo

At a training session at the World Bank in Washington, DC two years ago, Dr. Kavi Bhalla from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health asked attendees to look down at the palms of their hands. The meeting included professionals from all over the world who worked with national and local governments on transport policy and projects. When people hesitantly followed his call and placed their hands in front of their eyes, Dr. Bhalla said “your hands are tarnished with blood”.

This shocking start to the lecture was meant to demonstrate that road planners have been making a grave mistake for 100+ years by using road capacity and speed to help make the numbers of fatalities and serious injuries. Urban expressways and highways have become “parking lots” during peak hours and deadly traps the rest of the day.

More Road Space = More Congestion, More Fatalities

A blog post from The City Fix addressing the need to reduce speeds on the roads

For many years, road safety plans have placed the burden of responsibility on drivers and pedestrians. These traditional plans insists on focusing on educating road users so that they “abide by the traffic rules.” While this can help, it does not solve the road safety problem, as human beings are fallible.

A new approach to road safety, called “Vision Zero” (since 1997 in Sweden) or the “Safe System Approach” (since 1998 in Australia), recognizes that people will make mistakes, and aims to reduce the effects of our mistakes by designing a safer system. This is a considerable change in perspective: the user is no longer held responsible for crashes; instead, responsibility is shared with the designer, builder and manager of the road.
Media Interview

Media interviews, where you speak directly to a reporter, can have a significant impact on achieving your campaign objectives if done well. That’s why it’s important to thoroughly prepare - even before you receive the request for an interview. Completing these steps early on in your campaign will help you take swift advantage of a media interview opportunity once it arises.

1. **Develop key messages.** See Develop Key messages section.

2. **Identify your spokespersons and train them on how to conduct effective media interviews.** See Choosing Messengers section.

3. **Complete your media mapping.** See media mapping and media contact registry tools.

Once you have completed these steps it is important to do some specific preparation related to the media house that has contacted you, and to ensure you are personally prepared to speak confidently on the issue.

First, use this checklist of questions about the interview to help you prepare. Ask these questions to the media outlet that has requested the interview.

- What is the name of your outlet?
- When and where is the interview, how long will it be?
- Who else is being interviewed?
- What is the angle of your story?
- Why have you chosen the subject and selected me for the interview?
- When do you plan to run the story? Will the interview be broadcast live?
- Do you need a photo?

Once you’ve gathered this information, it’s time to prep for the interview. Start by preparing the content for the interview.

- Ask yourself: What do I know about the outlet’s audience? Are any of your target audience likely to see the interview? If so, what messages do you need to communicate to them? Make a list of the key messages you need to communicate to the target audience
- Gather supporting content - for example, statistics, facts and a personal story
- Find a current event that you can link your message to. This will give your message more immediate impact
- Make sure you research the reporter and the publication to see how they have covered your issue in the past

HELPFUL HINT: The Global Road Safety Partnership’s Advocacy Resource Centre is a one-stop resource for civil society organizations and individuals and features over 1000 pieces of content, which have been specifically collated and created to be useful for both road safety advocates and other parties that may be interested in addressing road safety. The Centre includes facts and messaging that you can use to help prepare your messages for interviews with the media.

Once you know what you want to say, now it’s time to practice, practice, practice. Have your colleagues pretend to be the interviewer. Work closely with your colleagues to develop a draft list of possible questions (see ideas on worksheet on next page). Then prepare succinct answers to these, using the content you’ve developed, and practice responding. Make sure some of the questions are challenging, and force you to re-frame the conversation to give answers that reinforce your key messages.

Media interviews can be intimidating, but by following the above steps and practicing your interview skills you will feel more confident when talking to journalists. Always remember, you are the content expert, so ensure that you lead the conversation and include your key issues and call to action as much as possible.
### EXAMPLE OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

#### Practice Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>INSERT POTENTIAL RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t road crashes happen just because people make bad decisions while driving?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People know how much they can drink and still drive safely. Why do you want more police control?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making it illegal to not wear seatbelts or have kids in child restraints is fine in rich countries, but how does it make sense in our country?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More fines just mean more money for the Government. How does more money going to the Government save lives?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will a law addressing road safety help pedestrians who are getting killed on the roads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So how will having police test for drink driving stop people getting killed? They can't catch everyone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are no real standards for helmets in our country, how do I know that wearing one will help save my life?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People generally know how fast they can safely drive on a road, why do you want to force specific speed limits?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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For more information about how to join the Global Road Safety Partnership please visit our website www.grsroadssafety.org