



AIDSCAP

Partnership with the Media

Working with
the Media for
HIV/AIDS
Prevention

THE AIDS CONTROL AND PREVENTION (AIDSCAP) PROJECT,
IMPLEMENTED BY FAMILY HEALTH INTERNATIONAL,
IS FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

PROJECT 936-5972.31-4692046
CONTRACT HRN-5972-C-00-4001-00



PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MEDIA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	5
II.	Partnership with the Media	7
	A. Who Are the Media?	7
	B. What Is a Partnership with the Media?	8
	C. Why Form a Partnership with the Media?	9
III.	Who are the Partners?	11
	A. Media Policy Makers	11
	B. Gatekeepers	12
	C. Journalists/Writers	13
	D. Journalism Schools	13
IV.	The Planning Stage	15
	A. Who Are the Media in Your Community/Region/Country?	15
	B. Situation Assessment	15
	C. Resource Identification	17
	D. Information Package	18
V.	The Partnership Events	21
	A. Suggested Events	21
	B. Co-Sponsoring Events	23

VI. Event One - Sensitization Meeting	25
A. Sensitization Meeting Topics	25
B. Sensitization Meeting Agenda	26
C. Assessing the Sensitization Meeting	28
VII. Event Two - Discussion Seminar	29
A. Information Package	29
B. Discussion Seminar Agenda	30
C. Assessing the Discussion Seminar	34
VIII. Event Three - Journalists' Workshop	35
A. Journalists' Workshop Topics	36
B. Journalists' Workshop Agenda	36
Part One - HIV/AIDS and the Media	36
Part Two - Strengthening HIV/AIDS Reporting Skills.....	40
Part Three - Identifying Resources and Networks	42
C. Assessing the Journalists' Workshop	43
IX. Event Four - School of Journalism Meeting	45
X. Follow-up Steps	47
A. Creating and Using Existing Networks	47
B. Keeping HIV/AIDS/STIs in the News	48

ACRONYMS

AIDS Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

AIDSCAP Family Health International's AIDS Control
and Prevention Project

BCC Behavior Change Communication

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

NGO Nongovernmental Organization

PLWA Person living with AIDS

STI Sexually transmitted infection

Acknowledgment:

This handbook was developed by the AIDSCAP BCC unit. Contributors include:

Donna Flanagan

Hally Mahler

Chalintorn Burian

Bunmi Makinwa

Elizabeth Ralston

section i - introduction

This handbook is one in a series developed by AIDSCAP's Behavior Change Communication (BCC) Unit. Its objective is to provide the reader with several complementary ways to establish a long-lasting partnership with the media.

A true partnership with the media requires a long-term relationship with people at all levels of the media establishment. Such a relationship will not develop from simply holding a journalism workshop.

This handbook suggests ways to form a partnership with the media. It provides:

- Ideas for four events to be held with media professionals.

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is one in a series developed by AIDSCAP's Behavior Change Communication (BCC) Unit. Its objective is to provide the reader with several complementary ways to establish a long-lasting partnership with the media.

A true partnership with the media requires a long-term relationship with people at all levels of the media establishment. Such a relationship will not develop from simply holding a journalism workshop.

This handbook suggests ways to form a partnership with the media. It provides:

- . Ideas for four events to be held with media professionals.
- . Suggestions for encouraging the development of a network of media professionals interested in HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STI) issues.
- . Suggestions for providing journalists with incentives for covering HIV/AIDS/STI issues.

When these activities are implemented individually, they can help improve your relationship with the local media. When all the activities are implemented as part of a comprehensive strategy, you will achieve a true partnership.

Other AIDSCAP BCC handbooks that may be useful for the development of a media partnership are:

- *How to Create an Effective Communication Project*
- *Behavior Change Through Mass Communication*
- *How to Conduct Effective Pretests*
- *Assessment and Monitoring of BCC Interventions*
- *How to Create an Effective Peer Education Project*
- *HIV/AIDS Care and Support Projects*
- *BCC for STD Prevention and Control*
- *Policy and Advocacy Work in HIV Prevention*

In addition, you may want to order the following resource book, which was useful in compiling this handbook:

Developing Health Journalists: A Training Manual for Improving News Coverage of Reproductive Health
Family Health International
PO Box 13950
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 USA

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MEDIA

A. Who Are the Media?

Electronic and print media staff and institutions are the focus of this handbook.

Electronic media include:

- . Radio
- . Television
- . Film and Video
- . News Agencies
- . E-mail and Internet

Print media include:

- . Newspapers
- . Magazines
- . Journals
- . Publications such as comics and brochures

Partners in the media are a diverse group of professionals from various institutions and organizations. They include:

- . Journalists
- . Reporters
- . Correspondents
- . Columnists
- . Feature writers

Partnership with the Media

- . Script writers
- . Editorialists
- . Commentators
- . Free-lance writers and producers
- . Broadcasters
- . News page sub-editors
- . Editors-in-chief
- . Producers
- . Station managers
- . Program managers
- . Media managers
- . Media house owners/presidents
- . Journalists' associations
- . Journalism professors/teachers
- . Ministry of Information officials

B. What Is a Partnership with the Media?

A partnership with the media is more than just training journalists at workshops. It is a true collaboration between health professionals and media professionals aimed at increasing effective, accurate and regular dissemination of information to the public. Health professionals learn about working respectfully with the media, and media professionals learn to appreciate the concerns of the health sector.

C. Why Form a Partnership with the Media?

A partnership with the media can link media professionals and health workers. Media professionals may have gaps in their understanding of development and health issues, and health workers often fail to understand the difficulties facing those who work in the media.

A partnership with the media will:

- . Improve communication between the media and health sector.
- . Encourage frequent, accurate, well-researched articles on HIV/AIDS/STI issues.

Without a good partnership, there may be poor media coverage, which could:

- . Spread false information about HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Create unnecessary fear or panic.
- . Contribute to an inappropriate lack of concern.
- . Have a negative effect on political and financial support for HIV/AIDS/STI prevention programs.

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?

You need to establish working relationships with media policy makers, gatekeepers, journalists, writers, journalism instructors and news agencies. Each of these groups has influence over one or more areas of media coverage.

A. Media Policy Makers

Media policy makers are those responsible for running and managing media organizations. These organizations may be owned by religious bodies, governments, private industry or private individuals. Ownership is likely to influence an organization's policies. Policy makers include:

- . Government ministers (e.g., the Minister of Information)
- . Managing directors of media organizations
- . Owners of media houses (e.g., newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations)
- . General managers (e.g. newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations)
- . Editors-in-chief
- . Publishers

Generally, policy makers are concerned with the financial, managerial and overall direction of their organizations. At first they may not care about health issues, especially controversial issues like AIDS. You may need to sell the im-

Who are the Partners? ---

importance of HIV/AIDS/STI issues to media policy makers. Section VI will give you suggestions on how to do this.

B. Gatekeepers

Media gatekeepers make daily decisions about content of newspapers, newsletters, magazines, radio and TV programs, videos and films. Media gatekeepers include:

- . Managing editors
- . News editors
- . Page editors
- . Sub-editors
- . Station managers
- . Program managers
- . Producers
- . Officers of journalists' associations

If gatekeepers understand and are supportive of the issues, they can ensure that:

- . HIV/AIDS/STI issues are covered regularly.
- . AIDS and sexuality issues are addressed sensitively.
- . Articles or programs about HIV/AIDS/STI help educate the public about the health, economic and social impact of the epidemic .

Who are the Partners?

- . Articles or programs about HIV/AIDS/STIs are not discriminatory or stigmatizing.
- . Articles and programs are placed on appropriate pages or broadcast at appropriate times.

You will need to reach and persuade media gatekeepers. Section VII suggests how to do this.

C. Journalists/Writers

Some journalists and writers investigate and report on stories or issues assigned to them by editors and other gatekeepers. Others select the topics for their articles, columns or broadcasts by themselves. Print and electronic journalists and writers include:

- . Reporters
- . Correspondents
- . Columnists
- . Feature writers
- . Script writers
- . Editorial writers
- . Commentators
- . Free lance writers
- . TV, radio and video writers and producers

These writers are often asked to cover issues in which they have very little background. They must balance their desire to accurately and effectively report on these issues with the need to meet deadlines. You can help them by providing training, informational meetings and lists of other sources of HIV/AIDS/STI information. Section VIII will give you some ideas.

Partnership with the Media


Who are the Partners? ---

D. Journalism Schools

Schools of journalism determine the curriculum for journalism students. They can include schools of journalism or departments of mass communication at universities and polytechnical institutes and special institutes of journalism.

School of journalism faculty members can influence students to take an interest in development and health issues. When student journalists become more knowledgeable in these areas, there is a good chance that their interest and understanding will be sustained over time.

Many schools of journalism have courses in economic or business reporting, but few have courses in health and other development areas. Therefore, you may need to work with journalism institutions to highlight the need for training in health issues. Invite journalism institution staff to participate in the training events. You may also want to volunteer your services to them (e.g., as a guest lecturer for HIV/AIDS issues or as part of a curriculum review committee). Section IX offers suggestions on strengthening your partnerships with the staff of journalism schools.



Remember:

In some countries there may be representatives of international news agencies. They can be full members of your partnership and should be included where appropriate in any of the four events discussed in this handbook.

THE PLANNING STAGE

A. Who Are the Media in Your Community/Region/Country?

Conduct a quick assessment of the media in your community, region or country. Learn about the various newspapers, magazines, radio, television and other media by visiting the Ministry of Information or media or journalist associations.

In addition to staff names and contact information, get information about:

- . Frequency of publications or broadcasts.
- . Circulation/viewing audience size.
- . Staff composition and size.
- . Names and titles of staff members (gatekeepers and journalists/writers) responsible for issues related to HIV/AIDS/STIs (e.g., health, socioeconomic, children, women, etc.).
- . The main target audience (Who do they reach?).
- . The most popular broadcasts, shows or features.

B. Situation Assessment

Conduct a situational assessment of important media to learn about attitudes, information needs and barriers to improved HIV/AIDS/STI

The Planning Stage

coverage. Learn about people at all levels of the media by using key informant interviews, focus group discussions or self-administered questionnaires.

Although the questions you ask potential partners at various levels of the media will vary, it is important to get answers to some or all of the following questions:

- . What are the economic and social issues that affect your organization's political base and readership?
- . What social good can your publication or program serve? How does coverage of health translate into development of society?
- . What would you like to learn about HIV/AIDS/STI issues?
- . Is there anything you have always wanted to do for your news organization but have been unable to do in the past because of lack of training or information?
- . (In the case of journalists) What would you like your editors to learn about HIV/AIDS/STIs to make your work easier?
- . (In the case of editors) What would you like the owners/directors of your organizations to learn about HIV/AIDS/STIs to make your work easier?
- . (In the case of editors) What would you like your journalists to learn about reporting on HIV/AIDS/STIs issues to help make their work easier?
- . (In the case of training institution staff) What would you like your students to learn about reporting on HIV/AIDS/STI issues?

Partnership with the Media

The Planning Stage

- . How important do you believe HIV/AIDS/STI issues are in the context of other newsworthy topics? development topics? health topics?
- . Do you report on STIs as a separate issue from HIV/AIDS?
- . What do you believe the media's role is in the face of the HIV/AIDS epidemic?
- . What do you believe are the roles of the reporter, editor, media owners, etc., in the face of the HIV/AIDS epidemic?

**Important:**

Use this information to make planning and design decisions about the events and meetings you hold. The goal is to plan events and meetings that will be beneficial to the participants so they will become active partners against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

- . How do you think HIV/AIDS/STI issues should be covered?
- . What do you believe are the biggest barriers to the fight against HIV/AIDS/STIs in your communities/regions/country?
- . Does your organization report frequently about HIV/AIDS issues?
- . Do you think there is much faulty or inaccurate reporting on HIV/AIDS issues?
- . Do you think there are many sensationalist stories about HIV/AIDS/STI issues?

Part of the situation assessment also requires that you collect and examine press clippings and radio and television programming to analyze the frequency, accuracy and quality of each media organization's coverage of HIV/AIDS.

Partnership with the Media

C. Resource Identification

A resource list of local, national and international sources of information about HIV/AIDS and STIs will become a valuable part of the information package you distribute to all participants. When you create the list, include names and contact information for:

- . Local, national and international organizations, donors or government offices working in HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Reliable, quotable experts.
- . Resource or information centers.
- . Businesses with HIV/AIDS/STI workplace programs.
- . Model HIV/AIDS/STI programs.
- . Periodicals, reports and other documents with good research information about HIV/AIDS/STI.
- . Service providers (e.g., STI clinics).
- . Telephone hot lines.

D. Information Package

In addition to the resource list, you must provide other information so that it will be easier for the media to cover HIV/AIDS/STI issues accurately.

Before you conduct events or meetings, get data about the following topics. If possible, write up the information as fact sheets to be included in the information package you prepare for all participants. The information is a guide for background discussions in each event.

1. Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS

- . Local, national and global HIV/AIDS statistics
- . Comparison with other regions
- . Projections for the future of the region
- . Distribution by sex, age, occupation, education, economic situation, etc.
- . Urban vs. rural rates

2. Prevention of HIV

- . Factors contributing to transmission
- . Relationship between STIs and HIV transmission
- . Prevention strategies
- . Risk assessment and vulnerability

3. Diagnosis and treatment

- . Services for counseling and testing
- . Consequences of untreated STIs and HIV infection
- . Living with HIV/AIDS, including opportunistic infections
- . Treatments and their availability

4. Research findings

- . Social science research
- . Medical research
- . Behavioral research
- . Treatment and vaccines

The Planning Stage

5. Economic impact

- . Cost to governments
- . Cost to labor force
- . Impact on specific labor sectors (e.g., agriculture, transportation)
- . Impact on general productivity
- . Cost to families

6. Impact on health

- . Treatment cost
- . Mortality rates
- . Impact on health centers, hospitals, clinics
- . Implications for hospital administration

7. Social impact

- . Impact on families and communities
- . Loss of generations
- . Increase in orphaned children
- . Impact on perceptions of sexual norms
- . Impact on education
- . Changes in stigmatization and discrimination

8. Policy level impact

- . Impact import duties and other tariffs and taxes have on important products (e.g., STD drugs and condoms)
- . Impact on human rights policies
- . Impact on other national policies (e.g., immigration, migration, insurance, job retention)

Partnership with the Media

THE PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

A. Suggested Events

Although this handbook suggests four separate events, together they make up one continuous and complementary approach. Each is aimed at reaching the same goal and each is a necessary part of the process of achieving that goal.

1. Event One - Sensitization Meeting

Event One is a two-or-three hour sensitization meeting with key media policy makers (e.g., owners, publishers and senior executives of media houses as well as top Ministry of Information officials, Deans of schools of journalism). This meeting will benefit the partnership by:

- . Encouraging and building commitment and support from media policy makers for improving effective and accurate reporting about HIV/AIDS issues, including socioeconomic, gender, care and support, and health and development issues.
- . Improving policy makers' knowledge of HIV/AIDS/STIs.

2. Event Two - Discussion Seminar

Event Two is a one-or-two day discussion seminar with gatekeepers (e.g., news editors, station managers, program managers, producers, managing editors, representatives from journalist associations and representatives from schools of

The Partnership Events

journalism and broadcasting). This discussion seminar will benefit the partnership by:

- . Exploring gatekeeper's roles and responsibilities for ensuring media coverage of HIV/AIDS/STI issues, including socioeconomic, gender, care and support, and health and development issues.
- . Improving gatekeepers' knowledge of HIV/AIDS/STIs.

3. Event Three - Journalists' Workshop

Event Three is a three-day training for journalists (e.g., news writers, commentators, sub-editors, editorial writers, feature and column writers, freelance writers, and radio, television and video writers and producers). This training will benefit the partnership by:

- . Enhancing the quality and increasing the frequency of good coverage of HIV/AIDS issues by journalists .
- . Improving journalists' knowledge about HIV/AIDS/STIs.

4. Event Four - Meetings with School of Journalism Faculty

Event Four may be a frequent occurrence. In this event, you meet with lecturers and other influential people who develop curricula and/or teach in a journalism school. This event is an opportunity to sensitize school officials and lecturers to the need for in-depth and ethical reporting on health issues and perhaps to have direct input into course content. If there are several institutes of mass communication or schools of journalism, you can meet with each group separately or bring them all together for a larger group session. These meetings will benefit the

partnership by:

- . Sensitizing institution faculty about the need for training about health issues.
- . Improving faculty's knowledge about HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Improving student journalists' training on HIV/AIDS/STI issues.

B. Co-Sponsoring Events

For political or financial reasons, you may want to invite another organization to co-sponsor one or more events with you. A well-respected co-sponsor may be able to get participation from people with whom you do not have any contact. Even if the co-sponsors do not contribute financially, they can:

- . Give advice about participant selection.
- . Provide an organization's logo for the invitation to senior executives.
- . Provide a meeting room.
- . Help advertise the meeting.

Examples of possible co-sponsors are local journalist associations, Ministry of Health and/or national AIDS control committees, international NGOs, United Nations agencies and religious organizations.

EVENT ONE — SENSITIZATION MEETING

The sensitization meeting is a two-to-three hour meeting for media policy makers. The objectives are to:

- . Encourage and build commitment and support from media policy makers for improving effective and accurate reporting about HIV/AIDS/STI issues .
- . Improve media policy makers' knowledge about HIV/AIDS.
- . Improve media policy makers' understanding of STIs.

Use the information collected during the situation assessment to tailor the meeting to the particular needs and concerns of the participants.



Remember:

At this meeting you want to sell HIV/AIDS/STI issues to the policy makers. They need to understand how and why HIV/AIDS/STIs are important to their audiences and their media organizations.

A. Sensitization Meeting Topics

Because this meeting is short, select the topics from the information package (see Section IV, part D) that will be most persuasive. If pos-

Event One — Sensitization Meeting

sible, prepare and distribute the information package to participants before they arrive at the meeting. The package will get their attention and help them understand that this will be an in-depth and important meeting.

B. Sensitization Meeting Agenda

The following is a sample agenda for a sensitization meeting with media policy makers.

1. Introduction and welcome

This session explains the purpose of the meeting and allows participants to get to know one another.

2. Opening address

The opening address covers a selected topic and aims at gaining the commitment of the participants. Some suggestions for this address are:

- . Does the media have a role and responsibility in HIV/AIDS/STI prevention efforts?
- . What are the barriers to effective media coverage of HIV/AIDS/STI issues?
- . Can the media serve the public health agenda?

3. Presentation and discussion on HIV/AIDS and on STIs

This individual or panel presentation covers some or all of the eight topics listed in Section IV, part D. It should be presented by a recognized local expert or experts on HIV/AIDS/STIs. STIs should be highlighted as a separate issue. The presentation should also reflect the information needs determined during the situation assessment. Visual aides and handouts (which should also be included in the information package) are useful to help participants remember all the information.

4. Commitment session

This is an opportunity to get commitment from the senior executives for more appropriate media coverage about HIV/AIDS/STI issues. In a plenary session or small groups, discuss:

- . How the media has helped or hindered HIV/AIDS/STI understanding and prevention in the past.
- . The role participants can play in ensuring more effective media coverage of HIV/AIDS issues.
- . How they will respond to the information they have learned .

Also:

- . Briefly explain, the purpose of Events Two (Discussion Seminar), Three (Training Workshop for Journalists) and Four (Meetings with School of Journalism Faculty).
- . Ask participants to provide names of key staff members from their organization who should participate in Events Two and Three. Get a commitment from them that they will allow these people to attend.

Event One — Sensitization Meeting

- . Ask for their assistance in ensuring free air-time, or editorial space for reporting and coverage of AIDS in their media. (You may want them to sign a form indicating their willingness.)

C. Assessing the Sensitization Meeting

Assess the success of the Sensitization Meeting by looking for results such as:

- . Did participants recommend appropriate people to attend the next two events?
- . Is there improvement in the coverage of HIV/AIDS/STI issues?
- . Did participants propose ways to get air-time or space in their newspapers for HIV/AIDS/STI coverage?
- . Are they prepared to meet with you again if necessary?

EVENT TWO — DISCUSSION SEMINAR

The discussion seminar is a one or two day event for media gatekeepers who have influence over media coverage of HIV/AIDS/STI issues. They often have the power to make AIDS coverage a priority in their organizations. The objectives of the discussion seminar are to:

- . Explore gatekeepers' roles and responsibilities for ensuring accurate media coverage of HIV/AIDS/STI issues.
- . Improve gatekeepers' knowledge of HIV/AIDS and STI issues.



Remember:

At this seminar you must convince the gatekeepers that it is important for their organizations to address HIV/AIDS/STIs.

A. Information Package

If possible, prepare and distribute the information package to participants before they arrive at the Discussion Seminar. This will get their attention and help them understand that this will be an in-depth and important seminar.

B. Discussion Seminar Agenda

The following is a sample agenda for a discussion seminar with media gatekeepers. The length of your discussion seminar will depend upon how many of these 10 activities you choose to do.

Event Two — Discussion Seminar

1. Introduction and welcome

This session explains the purpose of the meeting and allows participants to get to know one another.

2. Attitudes about HIV/AIDS

Participants divide into small groups to explore their attitudes and perceptions about HIV/AIDS/STI issues.

The objectives of this activity are to help participants:

- . Identify their own attitudes towards sexual practices and people affected by HIV/AIDS and STIs.
- . Understand how their attitudes reflect those of the wider population.
- . Discuss how the media can reinforce attitudes and behavior of the wider population.

In their small groups participants discuss:

- . Their opinions about behaviors that increase the risk of transmission of HIV/AIDS and STIs.
- . Their own and society's attitudes towards sex in general.
- . Their attitudes towards sex workers, men who have sex with men and other groups in society who have been blamed for spreading HIV/AIDS.
- . Their attitudes toward individuals, families and groups whose lives have been affected by HIV/AIDS and STIs.
- . The terms they use to describe sexuality.
- . How attitudes about sexual practices are re-

flected in the media.

- . How their attitudes and beliefs can be transferred to their audience.

3. HIV/AIDS background information

This individual or panel presentation by a local expert or experts provides participants with general knowledge about HIV/AIDS. STIs should be highlighted as a separate issue. Suggested topics can be found in Section IV, part D.

4. Economic impact of AIDS - direct and indirect costs

One of the objectives is to convince gatekeepers that the economic cost of HIV/AIDS is a newsworthy topic. The Ministry of Health may have information about the rising costs of hospital care and drugs. The Ministry of Planning or similar organization may have cost projections for the future.

Another way to alert participants to the serious economic consequences of AIDS is to look at the impact of HIV/AIDS/STIs in the workplace. If possible, get permission to develop a case study of a local organization that will illustrate the potential impact of HIV/AIDS on business profitability. Often a company's financial department will collect data about:

- . Number of employees and average salaries
- . Labor turnover costs
- . Training costs
- . Reduced productivity costs
- . Funeral attendance costs
- . Absenteeism costs

Event Two — Discussion Seminar

- . Recruitment costs
- . Annual health costs
- . Burial costs/death benefits

Remind participants that stories looking at this aspect of the epidemic are important for policy makers.

5. Living with HIV/AIDS

Some gatekeepers may need to be convinced that stories about people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA) and other AIDS-related human interest stories are newsworthy. An individual or panel presentation by PLWAs on living with AIDS will illustrate the human side of the epidemic. This session can also lead participants into a discussion of stigmatization and human rights.

Possible discussion topics include:

- . Challenges for a person living with HIV/AIDS.
- . Common misconceptions about people living with HIV/AIDS.
- . Stigmatization and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS.
- . How the media can affect an HIV-positive person.

6. Media coverage of HIV/AIDS and STIs - experiences from the field

Sharing examples of how the media has covered HIV/AIDS issues in the past can demonstrate the power of the media. Collect examples that illustrate situations where myths or misconceptions about HIV/AIDS have been spread or exposed by the media.

Event Two — Discussion Seminar

Other topics that can be addressed during this session include:

- . Sensationalist stories.
- . Media's responsibility to dispel myths.
- . Letters from readers that demonstrate public interest in HIV/AIDS issues.

7. Barriers to effective reporting on HIV/AIDS/STI issues

Another useful small group activity is a discussion of barriers to effective reporting on HIV/AIDS issues and ways to overcome these barriers.

Some barriers to consider include:

- . Inadequate access to accurate, up-to-date information.
- . Incorrect and false information.
- . Government policies and procedures (e.g. a policy that requires Ministry of Health approval of articles on certain health topics before they are published).
- . Sensitivity of topic (e.g., use of sexual language is not culturally appropriate).
- . Cultural attitudes about HIV/AIDS.
- . HIV/AIDS is not a priority for the news organization.
- . Fear of misrepresentation by the health sector.
- . Lack of understanding by reporters of medical terminology.
- . Sensationalism.
- . Single-source reporting, rather than verifying

Event Two — Discussion Seminar

information from other sources.

Ask participants to add to this list.

8. Roles and responsibilities of the media in the coverage of HIV/AIDS and STI issues

This session should flow easily from the earlier presentation. Participants can divide into small working groups to continue exploring the roles and responsibilities of the media in reporting on HIV/AIDS issues.

Some discussion topics include:

- . The negative impact that inaccurate and sensationalist reporting can have on HIV/AIDS control and prevention efforts.
- . Journalists' roles as sources of accurate, timely and relevant information on the epidemic for both the general public and policy makers in their countries.
- . Their responsibility for ethical reporting on HIV/AIDS issues.

Participants can also brainstorm ways in which the media can:

- . Influence attitudes and behaviors of the public.
- . Influence policy makers.
- . Take a leadership stand on HIV/AIDS/STI issues.
- . Maintain public focus on HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Communicate and inform the public about the realities of HIV/AIDS/STIs, including prevention, transmission, stigma, care, support and impact.

-
- . Correct misconceptions and myths about HIV/AIDS/STIs.
 - . Reduce stigma towards people living with HIV/AIDS.
 - . Support and monitor government and community efforts in HIV/AIDS/STI prevention.

9. Important resources

This is an opportunity to review the resource list you prepared for the information package. In this session, participants will:

- . Increase their awareness of resources for information on HIV/AIDS in their city, region or country.
- . Add resources to their resource list or book.
- . Encourage networking and resource sharing among themselves.

C. Assessing the Discussion Seminar

This seminar can be assessed informally. One way to wrap-up the seminar is to have a short session during which participants talk about what they intend to do as a result of what they have learned. Ask them to make suggestions about how they and their organizations can increase the quality and quantity of reporting on HIV/AIDS/STI issues. Write down their responses so you can look for improvements in their coverage in the weeks and months to come.

You can also ask whether participants would like to hold this type of seminar annually or more regularly. Their interest in doing so is an indicator of the success of the seminar.

EVENT THREE — JOURNALISTS' WORKSHOP

The journalism workshop is an opportunity for journalists, writers and selected gatekeepers to improve their reporting on HIV/AIDS/STI issues. The overall objectives of the journalism workshop are to:

- . Enhance the quality and increase the frequency of good reporting on HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Improve knowledge about HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Improve and/or develop the skills necessary to understand and write about the concepts, facts, and current research in specific areas of HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Make participants aware of important resources in the community.
- . Identify networks, resources and other sources of HIV/AIDS/STI and health-related information.

Use the information collected during the situation assessment to tailor the meeting to the particular needs of the participants.



Quality reporting on HIV/AIDS issues requires that journalists possess good journalism skills. For this reason, you may want to invite only participants whose work you know and respect. Or you can add

Event Three — Journalists' Workshop

reporting skills-building activities to your objectives and agenda so that the participants will actually research, write and edit stories during the workshop.

The length of the journalists' workshop will depend on the number of topics you cover. However, remember that journalists may not have a lot of free time. Consider creative ways to accommodate the work schedules and other demands of participants. For example, rather than choosing two or three consecutive days, you could hold the workshop over two or three Saturdays or several half days.

A. Journalists' Workshop Topics

The topics covered during this workshop will depend upon the objectives you set out to achieve. They can include:

- . Background information about HIV/AIDS and STI issues (see Section IV, part D).
- . Reporting skills (e.g., interviewing skills, privacy issues, feature writing, health research).
- . Development of a network of resources (e.g., where and who to go to for information).

Event Three — Journalists' Workshop

B. Journalists' Workshop Agenda

The following is a sample agenda for a three-part journalism workshop:

Part One - HIV/AIDS and the Media: Background Information and Discussion

1. Introduction and welcome

This session explains the objectives and agenda of the meeting and allows participants to get to know one another.

2. Attitudes about HIV/AIDS and STIs

Participants divide into small groups to explore their attitudes about HIV/AIDS issues.

Objectives are to help participants:

- . Understand how their attitudes reflect those of the wider population and how their media work can reinforce or change attitudes and behavior.
- . Identify their attitudes towards sexual practices and people affected by HIV/AIDS/STIs.

In small groups, participants can discuss:

- . Their opinions about behaviors that increase the risk of transmission of HIV/AIDS and STIs.
- . Their own or society's attitudes towards sex in general.
- . Their attitudes about people affected with STIs including HIV.

Event Three — Journalists' Workshop

- . The terms they use to describe sexuality.
- . How attitudes about sexual practices are reflected in the media.
- . How their attitudes and beliefs can be transferred to their audiences.

3. HIV/AIDS background information

This individual or panel presentation by a local expert or experts provides participants with general knowledge about HIV/AIDS. Highlight STIs as a separate issue. Suggested topics can be found in Section V, part D.

4. Living with HIV/AIDS

Some journalists may need to be convinced that stories about people living with HIV and other AIDS-related human interest stories are newsworthy. An individual or panel presentation by PLWAs on living with AIDS will present the compelling human side of the epidemic. This session can also lead participants into a discussion of issues such as stigmatization and human rights.

Some suggested discussion topics include:

- . Challenges for a person living with HIV/AIDS.
- . Common misconceptions about people living with HIV/AIDS.
- . Stigmatization and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS.
- . How the media can affect an HIV-positive person.

Event Three — Journalists' Workshop

5. Media coverage of HIV/AIDS and STI issues - experiences from the field

Sharing some examples of how the media has covered HIV/AIDS/STI issues in the past can demonstrate the power of the media. Collect examples that illustrate situations where myths or misconceptions about HIV/AIDS have been spread or exposed by the media.

Other topics that can be addressed during this session include:

- . Common local myths and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS and how media can perpetuate these myths and misconceptions (e.g., sensationalist stories).
- . Why STIs are an important prevention topic.
- . The media's role in dispelling myths.
- . Letters from readers that demonstrate public interest in HIV/AIDS issues.

6. Roles and responsibilities of the media in the coverage of HIV/AIDS and STI issues

This session should flow easily from the previous individual or panel presentation. Participants can divide into small working groups to continue exploring the roles and responsibilities of the media in reporting on HIV/AIDS/STI issues.

Suggested discussion topics include:

- . The negative impact that inaccurate and sensationalist reporting can have on HIV/AIDS/STI control and prevention efforts.
- . Journalists' roles as sources of accurate, timely and relevant information on the epi-

Event Three — Journalists' Workshop

demic (for both the general public and policy makers in their countries).

- . The responsibility for ethical reporting on HIV/AIDS/STI issues.

Participants can also brainstorm ways in which the media can:

- . Influence attitudes and behaviors of the public.
- . Influence policy makers.
- . Take a leadership stand on HIV/AIDS/STI issues.
- . Maintain public focus on HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Communicate and inform the public about the realities of HIV/AIDS/STIs, including prevention, transmission, stigma, care, support and impact.
- . Correct misconceptions and myths about HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Reduce stigma towards people living with HIV/AIDS.
- . Support and monitor government and community efforts in HIV/AIDS/STI prevention.

Part Two - Strengthening HIV/AIDS Reporting Skills



If you choose to offer skills-building sessions in this event, use a facilitator(s) who is an experienced journalist or editor and training facilitator. Use a participatory format to increase the hands-on-

Event Three — Journalists' Workshop

practice of reporting skills. You may want to work with electronic and print media journalists separately.

1. Critiquing and editing reporting on HIV/AIDS/STI issues

In this session, participants will examine the components of an interesting and easy-to-understand news or feature story (print or electronic) about HIV/AIDS/STI issues. To accomplish this task, they will get hands-on practice in:

- . Identifying elements of effective and ineffective HIV/AIDS/STI reporting.
- . Making scientific language simpler and less technical.
- . Reporting both hard and soft news (e.g., business report vs. human interest story).

This session is best accomplished when participants are working in small groups. It should be facilitated by highly experienced journalists, editors or other peers. Discussion topics can include:

- . Characteristics of a well-written and interesting article/story.
- . Characteristics of an ineffective article/story.
- . Differences between reporting facts and reflecting opinions.

2. Interviewing techniques

The sensitive nature of HIV/AIDS/STI issues makes it a difficult topic for an interview.

Event Three — Journalists' Workshop

Consider a special session where journalists practice their interviewing skills and discuss confidentiality and other related issues in small groups or role plays.

3. Practicing new skills

After participants have discussed the technically proper way to develop a news or feature story (whether print or electronic) on HIV/AIDS/STI issues, you will want them to practice these skills by actually writing. Do this by:

- . Providing them with documents and/or people to interview during the workshop session.
- . Taking them on a field trip to meet people or view locally available resources.
- . Giving them an assignment to complete for the next workshop session.

When participants return to the workshop (and/or their small groups) they can discuss the rationale of their articles and provide constructive criticism of each other's submissions. Some criteria for analyzing the articles/stories include:

- . Has the writer made a connection between the subject presented and the HIV/AIDS pandemic?
- . Is there any prejudiced view of gender, ethnicity, race, or sexual preference?
- . What kind of terminology is used? (e.g., judgmental, unbiased)
- . If explanations were given, were they clear? Were they accurate?

4. Health journalism guidelines and ethics

After participants have written their stories and discussed ways to improve them, ask them to develop a set of basic guidelines and ethics for health journalism. Some examples of good guidelines include:

- . Always check facts to ensure accurate and responsible reporting.
- . Avoid sensationalism.
- . Avoid stigmatizing people affected by HIV/AIDS.
- . Encourage prevention activities.
- . Rely on a variety of viewpoints.
- . Respect confidentiality.
- . Offer resources to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Ask participants to add to this list.

Part Three - Identifying Resources and Networks

1. Important resources

This is an opportunity to review the resource list you prepared for the information package. In this session, participants will:

- . Increase their awareness of resources for information on HIV/AIDS/STIs in their city, region or country.
- . Add resources to their resource list or book.
- . Encourage networking and resource sharing among themselves.

2. Developing networks

Encourage journalists and others who participate in your workshop to stay in touch with you and with each other. If there is already a network or association of journalists interested in HIV/AIDS/STI issues, invite the chairperson to address the participants. If networks don't exist, see Section X for a list of ideas and activities to encourage networking.

C. Assessing the Journalists' Workshop

Think about each of the three parts of the workshop. In part one you focused on attitudes and knowledge of the participants about HIV/AIDS/STI issues. In a large or small group, have participants talk about any changes in attitude or knowledge that they have experienced as a result of this workshop. Are they more aware of their responsibility to cover HIV/AIDS/STI topics? Are they more understanding and accepting of people affected by AIDS? Many facilitators also give pre- and post-tests about the knowledge and attitudes dealt with during the workshop. Compare the participants' answers to the pretest with their answers in the post-test to assess this part of the workshop.

The quality of participants' written work during the workshop is a good way to assess the success of the second part of the workshop. Ask if participants plan to write other articles in the near future. If they are willing, ask them to tell you the topics they plan to cover. You can also measure any increase in the quantity of HIV/AIDS/STI coverage. Review the media for one week before the workshop, noting each article, story, news item, column and editorial that

appears in print or electronic media. Several weeks or months after the workshop, monitor coverage again for a week. Has the quality and quantity increased?

To assess the success of Part Three, ask the participants to add to the resource list and also to inform you when they find another source of useful information.

EVENT FOUR— SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM MEETING

In many countries, people who work in mass communication get their original training in schools of journalism. These may be a department of journalism or mass communication in a university, a polytechnical institute or a special institute for journalists.

If students become interested in health-related issues during their training, they are likely to stay interested when they become professionals. You can influence their teachers and their curriculum by taking the time to know the teachers, answer their questions, make well-planned presentations, and involve them in special HIV/AIDS/STI activities.

Hold a meeting for heads of departments, lecturers, curriculum developers and administrators. Include students if appropriate. The purpose of the meeting is to convince them of the importance of quality reporting on HIV/AIDS/STIs. You have several things to offer them. You can:

- . Provide a ready-made information package they can use to check facts and create story ideas.
- . Offer to make a presentation as a guest lecturer to students (or make arrangements for another expert to do so).

Follow-up Steps

- . Offer to have journalism students interview you or other experts.
- . Become a regular resource person for students or faculty who are researching HIV/AIDS issues.
- . Suggest stories that students can pursue such as human interest and recent research.
- . Offer to host an annual HIV/AIDS/STI symposium for new students.

You will probably want to have similar meetings several times a year in order to encourage a long-lasting partnership with the schools of journalism and their students.

FOLLOW-UP STEPS

Getting media policy makers, gatekeepers, journalists and teachers involved in networking meetings can keep them interested in HIV/AIDS/STI issues. Networks can:

- . Keep media professionals informed about new HIV/AIDS/STI research.
- . Provide a forum for discussions about how the media covers HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Provide an opportunity to present interesting speakers.

A. Creating and Using Networks

Many countries have associations or networks of media professionals interested in specific topic areas (e.g. health). Ask these associations or networks to:

- . Include HIV/AIDS/STI issues in their meeting agendas.
- . Invite HIV/AIDS/STI experts to speak at their meetings.
- . Create a committee or sub-committee dedicated to HIV/AIDS/STI issues.
- . Sponsor members to attend your events or meetings.
- . Sponsor journalism contests.

If there is no existing network, help the participants who attend your events and meetings form their own network of media professionals (or media professionals and health professionals) interested in HIV/AIDS/STI issues. You can

help start this network by:

- . Launching the first meeting.
- . Sponsoring future events.

B. Keeping HIV/AIDS in the News

After you have held the four suggested events and set up a network of media professionals, you will need to find new ways to encourage the media to keep HIV/AIDS/STI issues in the news.

1. Journalism contests

Hold an annual journalism contest to encourage articles or stories about HIV/AIDS/STIs. You can hold separate contests or give out awards for different types of reporting in both print and electronic media. For example, you can hold contests for:

- . Human interest stories about HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Stories about how HIV/AIDS/STIs affect women or children.
- . Medical reporting on HIV/AIDS/STIs.
- . Scientific reporting in lay person's terms.
- . Radio programs dedicated to HIV/AIDS/STI issues.
- . Soap operas or other entertainment media's use of HIV/AIDS/STI storylines.

To hold a journalism contest, you need to:

- . Advertise the contest.
- . Set time and reporting type parameters.
- . Select and advertise the criteria by which

articles will be judged.

- . Select fair and impartial judges.
- . Decide on the award or prize.
- . Advertise the winners.

2. Commentaries, stories, columns, editorials and/or letters to the editor

Keep HIV/AIDS/STI issues in the news by asking a local newspaper, magazine or radio station for space for a weekly (or monthly) HIV/AIDS/STI column or commentary. Use the contacts you made with media policy makers and gatekeepers to make this happen.

Also consider writing regular letters to the editor of various newspapers or magazines that address HIV/AIDS/STI issues.

3. Public relations firms

One convenient and effective way to keep HIV/AIDS/STI issues in the news is to hire a professional public relations firm or consultant. Although public relations firms can be expensive, they are valuable assets to HIV/AIDS/STI projects.

Public relations professionals use a variety of techniques (e.g., regular media contacts, symposia or other events and press releases) to ensure that ideas or products receive media coverage. They can also help you win over private sector support for your meetings, events, journalism contests and/or other project activities.

4. Personal follow-up

Continue making HIV/AIDS/STIs an important media topic by meeting individually with media policy makers, gatekeepers and journalists on a regular basis to encourage their continued interest in and coverage of HIV/AIDS/STI issues. Use this time to update them on recent news or trends. Invite them to attend a project event or activity. Set a schedule that allows you to meet them once or twice a year. Keep the partnership alive!

Meet with producers or writers of television or radio soap operas or shows. Through these channels you can keep HIV/AIDS/STI issues in the media on a daily or weekly basis.