

'We Stop HIV' – Community participation for a successful public awareness campaign

Introduction

Community participation is key for the success of HIV awareness-raising campaigns. Co-production of the campaign's strategy, objectives and messages ensures the campaign addresses the visions and needs of PLWHIV and the most vulnerable communities, the language is adequate and appropriate communication channels are used. In addition, early involvement increases the potential of community mobilization and motivation to participate in the design, and implementation of the campaign.

Key messages:

Theme	Messages
HIV test	Anyone who has unprotected sex can become infected with HIV. Getting tested is the only way for a person to know whether or not they are infected.
Condom	Condoms protect against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections as well. In health centers and other places in the city, condoms are free.
PrEP	In addition to using a condom, HIV infection can be prevented by taking a pill every day. This is called pre-exposure prophylaxis, also known as PrEP.
U=U	When a person living with HIV is on effective treatment, the virus is not transmitted through sexual intercourse. Sexuality can be lived without fear.

Graphic materials:

Panel (collective painting), videos, posters, A3 posters, postcards, making of photographs

Description:

In 2019, the FTC Lisbon initiative developed the second municipal campaign to raise public awareness for HIV about testing, PrEP, condom use and U=U. NGOs' and activists representing various key groups (younger and older people, LGBTQ+, migrants) were involved in the campaign to ensure the adequacy of campaign messages and their effective communication, that both the general public and the most vulnerable identified themselves with the campaign, and a wide audience was reached. The campaign was disseminated through civil society organisations and health services, as well as in billboards located in the streets and underground, social media, websites and scientific and community events.



Advertising structures	Reach
CML website	Users 176 217
Facebook CML	8,000,000/month
Instagram CML	2,500,000/month
Twitter CML	558,000/month
Vimeo CML	14,200 videos
Tomi Videos	53 equipment: 35 Metro stations 18 City squares
Lisbon Channel	18 Video Panels
Collection 4 postcards	8000
Collection 4 posters	240
Billboards	60
Grimshaw	40

Lessons Learned:

The use of collective photographs reflecting the diversity of Lisbon citizens increased the willingness of individuals to show themselves in the campaign materials, while allowing for PLWHIV and the most vulnerable communities to identify with the campaign but also making HIV a day-to-day issue for the general population. Early involvement of community representatives and other HIV stakeholders increased their motivation to participate and collaborate and contributed to appropriation of the campaign by the organisations involved. The participatory approach also resulted in the recognition of the campaign as "Campaign of the Year" by a LGBT cultural and news website.

Recommendations:

Start early and ensure enough time for a meaningful participation in the campaign design and implementation. Involve the whole community beyond HIV and the most vulnerable.

For more information


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