

IOM #TraffickingIsReal Campaign entry – draft

CATEGORY - NGO CAMPAIGN

Statement of the Problem 10 max 100 words

The crime of trafficking is a global phenomenon and the third largest profitable illegal trade after drugs and weapons. Through a partnership with the University of Johannesburg (UJ), IOM once again partnered with the Strategic Communication students from UJ to embark on a week-long social media campaign focusing on human trafficking in the country. Running with the hashtag #TraffickingIsReal, this campaign was aimed to primarily educate, create awareness and inform the South African masses through social media about the different types of trafficking and the kind of methods traffickers use to lure their victims.

Research 15

Human Trafficking Awareness Week runs annually and in 2016 ran from 3 October – 7 October 2016. Second year students from the Department of Strategic Communication volunteered in the second quarter of 2016 to collect the data that helped develop the campaign idea, making the campaign possible, in part through funding from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), South Africa. The survey was created by two UJ lecturers, based on the IOM SACTAP factsheet.

Students collected quantitative data using a human trafficking awareness survey measuring levels of awareness of Trafficking in Persons (TiP) in South Africa. Most of the data was collected in Gauteng, amongst a sample of 993 predominantly young people, most of whom grew up in urban areas (87.8% were between 12 –35 years).

According to the US State Department 2016 Report, 'Trafficking in Persons (TiP)': "South Africans constitute the largest number of victims within the country. South African children are recruited from poor rural areas to urban centers."

All the research findings confirmed that the size of the problem in South Africa is vastly underestimated and that the public is unaware of the ease with which TiP can take place. Using all the insights from the primary and secondary research, the #TraffickingIsReal campaign was conceived as a build-up from the success of the #TRAPPED campaign which was launched in the year 2014 through the same partnership.

Planning 25

The #TraffickingIsReal campaign was aimed to primarily educate, create awareness and inform the masses through social media about the different types of trafficking and the kind of methods traffickers use to lure their victims. The campaign was used to raise awareness about TiP in South Africa amongst the general public. In so doing, educate the public about **how** TiP happens and expose different types of exploitation that victims of this suffer. Through the stories, highlight for the public one of the five areas IOM is working on, which is combatting human trafficking and ultimately spread awareness through lobbying and media support in order to open dialogue amongst young South Africans.

The objectives would be measured through the media opportunities gained and coverage, social media engagement with the campaign and website traffic to the IOM website. The campaign objectives were outlined and planned to coincide with the timing of human trafficking awareness week.

Due to its hidden nature, substantiating trafficking in terms of statistics in South Africa is very difficult, even though there is evidence that this crime is being committed in South Africa. The aim was to educate all persons in South Africa that no one is immune from being trafficked, since this can take on many forms and highlight the vulnerabilities that create the opportunity for individuals to be trafficked, to make people more alert to their current situations.

Using the campaign hashtag #TraffickingIsReal, UJ students formed part of a campaign photoshoot showcasing the three types of trafficking the project was focused on in 2016. The campaign photoshoot included images that highlighted sexual exploitation, domestic/labour exploitation, and child trafficking. The students, in partnership with the IOM compiled different messages in the three different categories about human trafficking that would be used as media talking points, as well as content to be disseminated through the IOM social media pages during the 2016 human trafficking week.

The campaign followed a multi-pronged approach to drive home the message. The IOM social media pages were used, as well as the website, since these were already in place and would only be used to amplify the messages IOM distributes through these channels. By means of undertaking several activities aimed at the general public, the community level as well as the government level, IOM took the #TraffickingIsReal campaign forward to the media, lobbying for coverage and opportunities to engage / speak about the realities and dangers of TiP. Throughout the campaign, IOM's Facebook and Twitter accounts would be updated with photos from the campaign shoot, general information and statistics about human trafficking in South Africa to encourage open engagements with the content and dialogues on the campaign topic.

The collaboration between IOM and UJ is a well-established partnership, and the processes involved collaboration on the idea and the content, and planning for the sequence of events to be undertaken during the campaign. The campaign received the highest levels of support from both institutions with Mr. Richard Ots, the Chief of Mission of IOM South Africa and Prof Sonja Verwey, Head of Department of Strategic Communication at UJ leading the charge.

Interviews with the media were aimed to raise awareness about TiP in order to open up dialogues for this incommunicable topic. Information and education was targeted for the general public through the chosen social media platforms. Where people wanted to know more, they were directed to the IOM website, to find out more about the campaign. All efforts were focused on building up to and heightening activity during human trafficking awareness week in October 2016.

IOM took the #TraffickingIsReal campaign to the people, updating the social media pages with attention-grabbing campaign images, supporting these with general information and statistics about human trafficking in South Africa and asking pointed questions stemming from the campaign research questionnaire, and sharing stories of TiP victims on both Facebook and Twitter through planned content. The content was delivered in a manner that encouraged open engagement and dialogue to make the topic more accessible to mainstream conversation, especially through the hashtag #TraffickingIsReal, to make it easy for people to participate in the conversation.

The campaign team was adjusted and allocations regarding the story-telling done to be suitable for owners of the stories to comfortably share their experiences for them to be used in the campaign, and the utmost care had to be taken to protect their identities,. Constant daily monitoring of the campaign was done to build in flexibility with the content, and support popular content with.

Evaluation

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During the human trafficking awareness week, the campaign successfully lobbied several interviews that were broadcast on national television and radio stations in order to create awareness with the broader public. These were with the following media:

- *Radio stations*
 - Channel Africa - MP3 sent
 - Power FM
 - SA FM
 - EWN Cape Town
 - UJ FM
 - Vuma FM
- *Newspapers*
 - Sowetan
- *Television*
 - ANN7
- *Online*
 - Skills Portal - <http://www.skillsportal.co.za/content/human-trafficking-campaign-begins>
 - The New Age - <http://www.thenewage.co.za/caroline-azionya-on-the-global-fight-against-human-trafficking/>
 - South African News Today - <http://www.southafricanewstoday.co.za/news/top-stories/2016/10/caroline-azionya-on-the-global-fight-against-human-trafficking/>

The social media posts attracted a lot of engagement, some creating the other media opportunities the campaign attracted. All in all, Facebook had over 36,000 page reach during the human trafficking week while the activity on Twitter gained over 21,000 impressions during the same period.

The most successful content was the campaign launch message, accompanied by this image, with over 270 engagements on Twitter and over 1,200 Facebook engagements:



The WOW Factor

10

IOM in Geneva Head Quarters applauded the #TraffickingIsReal campaign, especially the innovative use of social media, and have encouraged other missions (across other geographies) to use the success of this campaign as an example of an innovative way to raise public awareness on the issue of Human Trafficking.