

Report on Two-days' workshop on Campaign Planning for students of MA, Communication for Development Studies (C4D), Tezpur University- November 12 & 13, 2019

Workshop in Brief



Figure 1 Facilitator: Sanjeev Kumah

It began exactly ten minutes into the hours of ten (10:10 am), with an introductory phase led by the course instructor in Campaign Planning at the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Tezpur University; Dr Anjuma Borah.

“Sanjeev has been working in this field for long and have worked with UNICEF in this capacity on several projects. This is an opportunity to learn from him as someone with a practical field experience”

Next was a familiarisation phase, where participants had the opportunity of a self-introduction and their motivation for taking up a course in Communication for Development.

Below are samples of views shared by participants;

“I sincerely had no idea about what Communication for Development was about. I had applied for a Masters in MCJ but this is where I ended up. However, I have come to realise this as an extension of MCJ with much emphasis on development...”

“For me, I already have an MA in Mass Communication and Journalism, but I have the opportunity of being introduced to development work during my gap-year period. This inspired my decision for this C4D...”

“I had wished for an MA in Social Works, but my friend, who was part of the second batch advised me to choose C4D. According to him, there existed some commonalities between the two streams...”

The two days’ workshop proper was heralded by what could be termed the problem identification stage/ situation analysis. The host presented participants an opportunity to identify five topmost development issues, which according to them should be prioritised by the national government.

“what are the five issues you think are the topmost development issues in the country which you or government or any organisation should consider tackling? Five big issues. Five major challenges you would like to talk about...”



Figure 2 Cross section of participants at the workshop

Top development issues needing prioritisation shared by participants were;

Malnutrition

Mental health

Climate Change

Population

Unemployment

Poverty

Gender and Women Empowerment

Border conflicts

Of the major priority areas shared, Sanjeev led participants in an in-depth analysis of population and why it's an issue deserving government's attention.

Population

Population according to him is a big development issue because "India as a country gives births to 'one Australia every year...'"

Laced with practical sessions, participants in groups of three, representing the practical field engagement component of the C4D course had the chance for a process presentation relating to themes (nutrition, media club & child cabinet) of their field engagements.

Workshop focus areas

The two days' workshop stressing the processes involved in rolling out a full-fledged campaign, highlighted the fundamentals of an insight into the problem to be addressed (why), central theme identification, call to action (CTA), and practical case study scenarios of campaign messages in history.

Participants also had the chance at an introduction to basic requirements of report writing and the project presentation.

Also, a brief consideration was made of research as being an indispensable part of the campaign planning and messaging process. This could be realised through existing data by way of literature reviews from recognised sources against conducting first-hand research to gather primary data.

According to Sanjeev, knowledge of the development problem at hand is inadequate until backed with relevant data.

“Data is the most significant aspect of any campaign undertaking; it requires knowledge of the right data sources. (Research findings of recognised institutions (International and National) for instances, UNICEF, National Family Health Survey, The national Population census data

The WHY of the Campaign?

The focus of any campaign undertaking is CHANGE. The first step is the appreciation of what? And the Why of the situation – **INSIGHT**

Call-To-Action (CTA)

The Call to Action defines the desired attitude the target ought to adopt at the end of the campaign.

Call to Action- consider the benefits (what is in it for me) – think from the perspective of your target audience

“... does your campaign have a call to action? Any good campaign should have a clear call to action...”

“... call to action is good, but they will do it if in their mind they can identify what is in it for them...”

“... Your call to action must tell the audience to adopt a particular change. What’s within your campaign that will make your audience to do this?”

AIDA- Attention or Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action

Participants queried the place of importance in the design process, especially from the field of behaviour change communication, when especially efforts are about a desirous change in the long run, which the target audience might not resonate with from the word go.

Why should the audience's consideration of what is important be considered?

"you can only get to the next step if you catch my attention..."

"... If you don't see and make things from your users' perspective, he's attention is not going to be grabbed. You are not designing the campaign for you but your audience..."

"...If it is not from their perspective why will he or she be interested? So, your job is to get their attention. Make it interesting. Make it exciting. Once you have made me desirous, I will make an action..."

Case Study

In order to aid the practical understanding of participants- the facilitator made use of several exemplary campaign undertakings of the past, which again served a basis for critical discussions and analysis of consideration relevant in campaign messaging.

Case study analysis of "Ring the Bell Campaign" India

The campaign referenced in the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmNz0cTcxFU> is an initiative by Breakthrough India on domestic violence- stressing the need for a communal approach to fighting such cases, then an attitude of indifference.

Discussions on this case study led to the realisation that domestic violence is rampant due to the enormous communal indifference towards it.

"...that most people who know it, hear it, see it do not get involved. They start saying it's their personal matter. And the perpetrator also knows nobody will come...so, the message is very clear; do not be a bystander. If you see, hear it, apprehend it; ring the bell. Stop! Take some action. It is not directed to the male who is doing it. Indirectly it's for his own good too.

So, the message of the campaign was "Do not be a bystander. Be concern. Report such occurrences within your community. Do not be silent and make it known that domestic violence is wrong."

"Ring the bell is symbolic. It has physical meanings. It has symbolic meanings. Ring the bell means to make the noise. Make them know it's wrong and call the authority also."

"... one thing about domestic is most people do not want to get involved. They are reluctant to get involved. They are afraid to get involved."

Sometimes you need to understand that a basic theme can translate into so many different meanings. The basic message might be the same, but how we choose to use it matters most.

Case study analysis- Whose reality counts? Praxis India

This video animation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzYv3dInZDI&t=31s> by Praxis India was used in a case study scenario to critic the relevance of perspectives in the campaign planning and message design process.

Out of the discussions on the video animation, it was argued that seeing things of multiple points of views was a relevant aspect of the campaign desire and message process. This is crucial given that it will offer insight into understanding things from the target audience point of view. It will also ensure that their considerations become a necessary part of the entire process. It would also make them take interest and respond positively to the campaign undertaking.

Group based presentations on campaigns/ Assignments

The workshop also covered extensive sessions on requirements of project presentation and reporting. In practical term, participants had the opportunity to under the guidance of the facilitator, undertake PowerPoint presentations on their field engagements.

The presentations covered thematic of situation analysis, participant analysis, project cycle amongst other relevant considerations.

This gave the facilitator the chance to lead participants subject their on-field campaign considerations thorough analysis in light of best project practices.



Figure 3 Participants during a presentation at the workshop

