



---

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

The concept of Public Relations (PR) is defined as “a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organisations and their publics”. In effect, public relations helps to influence an audience’s perceptions by developing relationships and shaping public conversations about an organisation or a given cause communicated through an awareness raising campaign that may be carried out through mass media and social media over a certain period of time.

The public relations enables communication in a wider context on a particular topic, often by telling a story around a selected content, but it requires a longer period of time to achieve visible results. Within the public relations a wide range of communication activities may be performed, including the awareness raising about a selected topic, creating content adequate for different communication channels or planning events to engage diverse target audiences. In this context, is important to understand how to develop and use effective messages in communicating with media and desired target audiences.

The type and dynamics of PR activities that may be implemented in awareness raising campaigns about trafficking in human beings depend on the selected content and the occasion within a specific context. Besides using PR activities for various events (such as public events, workshops, trainings, conferences etc.), it is important to maintain a continuous communication flow around selected topics of the awareness raising campaign in media, whether it is the topic of Minors at risk of cyber trafficking, Women and girls at risk of sexual exploitation and trafficking, or Refugees and migrants at risk of trafficking.

PR tools that can be used are:

- Interview / media statement / guest appearance / live show
- Press release
- Media event / briefing
- Feature article
- Marking an occasion
- Working with celebrity

A PR calendar developed alongside the list of selected tools would be helpful to outline regular and occasional PR activities. Dynamics of implementation of the chosen PR activities depends on the framework and timeline of the awareness raising campaign, striving to ensure a regular presence in media across different communication channels.

#### **INTERVIEW**

#### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **MEDIA EVENT**

#### **FEATURE ARTICLE**

#### **MARKING AN OCCASION**

#### **WORKING WITH CELEBRITIES**

#### **INTERVIEW**

A story given by the spokesperson of an organisation or the campaign, interviewed by a media reporter at the request of either the organisation or the reporter. An interview may be given for TV, radio, web portal or print media.

An interview provides a personalised angle about a given story, with real-life reminiscences and parallels related to trafficking in human beings, thus having a strong potential to make an emotional impact in raising awareness campaigns.

TV/radio - a broadcast interview can be live or recorded, and requires a good preparation of spokespersons and reporters to effectively convey organisation's key facts and campaign's key messages.

Print/online – an interview for print media or web portals provides spokesperson's answers to journalist's questions and gives a framework for a wider story on the organisation with important facts, quotes etc.

Important to know:

Identify who will be interviewed on behalf of the organisation / campaign – and get prepared in advance.

- Define the topic of the interview – align the topic with the current context and always think of how to place key messages.
- Select an appropriate media outlet for the interview - based on the topic of interest and the target group we want to address.
- Agree with the selected person to accept the interview, topic and media – present a background of the media to the spokesperson.
- Pitch the interview to the media – call media to explain who would be interviewed and why such topic and person are interesting for the views/readers of that media; ask for questions in advance.
- Prepare the person who is being interviewed by preparing Q&A either on the actual or expected questions – avoid surprises, be informed about current development related to the topic that make media headlines.
- Ask for the interview authorisation - media are not obliged to authorise texts, but be aware of potential material mistakes in the interview and if there are some ask for the correction.
- Follow through until the interview is published – stay in touch with the journalist, ask for the date of publication, provide a photograph of your own or arrange for a photo shoot with media.
- Take press clipping report for the archive – arrange for the media monitoring throughout the campaign and save all media cuts for your file, to follow and measure the campaign success.

## **PRESS RELEASE**

A form of brief and informative news story about the organisation's current activities or landmarks of the campaign written for and released to the media, in particular to print newspaper. This format contains key information and statements of the organisation or campaign spokesperson or endorser.

It is prepared and distributed to target media to announce some important news, such as the campaign kick-off and closure, statistical data gathered about trafficking in human beings, information about a certain event, outcome or results.

The press release can be distributed on paper or flash memory at a live event, or sent by email or posted on a website. The text is marked as Press Release at the top of the page i.e. in the e-mail subject.

Important to know:

- Identify a theme for writing a press release – think of what is important for media to know as a newsworthy information on current activities.
- Identify media relevant for the press release based on the topic and target audience – make a list of media potentially interested in the subject to whom the press release will be distributed.
- Write the press release as per the available template and include the key messages – always state in the initial paragraph the five Ws (Who, What, Where, When, Why) to get the media attention.
- Send press release to the media in a customised format – always mark the text as Press Release at the top of the page i.e. in the e-mail subject, to make it an important announcement.
- Pitch and follow up of the press release - call media to ensure they are interested in publishing the content and explain why the topic and content are relevant for their audience.
- Monitor publications and report about the media coverage – organise regular media monitoring, take note of each media cut appeared and keep press clipping for the file.

## **MEDIA EVENT**

Media event usually includes a press conference as a PR tool mainly reserved for announcing major news about the organisation or the campaign, when there is something important to announce or present to a wider public, such as to introduce the campaign kick-off, its slogan and visuals, campaign endorsers, etc.

In certain occasions, during the campaign, some important news or development may arise that would require immediate media attention by announcing the news at a press conference, e.g. to present a new hotline established during the campaign to report trafficking in human beings.

It is important to carefully select the occasion and make sure the speakers, usually not more than three persons, are well versed to discuss the topic and answer media inquiries that are made at the event.

### Important to know:

- Decide if there is a topic/ news or occasion big enough to organise the event with the sole purpose of inviting media – have in mind that media look for newsworthy stories and have no time to lose.
- Identify speakers at the event and agree with them on the agenda – select not more than three speakers and assign the key topics of the agenda to each of them.
- Prepare the agenda of the event – think of every detail of the event as you are the host and need to have a clear idea of the entire concept and the timing.
- Identify and prepare a list of media to invite to the event – carefully select media outlets interested in the topic and particular journalists i.e. editors to be invited.
- Prepare a media announcement – write an invitation text for media highlighting key information about the event topic to gain their attention, but always keep the main story for the event.
- Prepare logistics for the event – as you are the host carefully choose the venue that best suits the occasion, provide for the campaign roll up or other promotional elements, and some refreshment.
- Prepare press kit to distribute at the event – this involves a press release related to the event with statements from the speakers, fact sheet, brochure, giveaways etc.
- Prepare talking points for the speakers - make sure the key messages are highlighted along with key information on the topic, and prepare a Q&A document with possible questions and answers.
- Brief the speakers – set up a briefing session or provide detailed instructions via e-mail about the agenda, talking points, and Q&A document to all speakers at the event.
- Organise the event – besides the logistics prepared in advance, prepare a detailed scenario and gather a team to carry out the event and liaise with media and speakers on site.
- Follow through with the media after the event – distribute the press kit at the event, followed by photographs, and liaise with media on the site and afterwards to publish stories from the event.
- Organise media monitoring – track down the articles and media coverage from the event that appeared in the media.
- Prepare press clipping report for the archive – the press clipping is an important part that enables you to follow how the key messages resonate with media and thus measure the campaign success.

## **FEATURE ARTICLE**

A story that provides detailed information on a selected issue, situation, organisation or campaign, often focusing on the human element and a particular angle within the given context, with the aim to raise awareness, educate and provoke an emotional response of readers.

Feature stories are offered to selected newspapers and magazines, elaborated from a wider perspective, to explain different aspects of trafficking in human beings, root causes of this phenomenon, ways of prevention, modalities of support to victims, provide expert opinions, etc.

These articles can be offered through thematic conversations with selected spokespersons in a local context, for local media, which provides better understanding of specific target audiences.

Important to know:

- Identify a theme or angle for the article based on the key topic of the campaign – follow the key messages and illustrate the topic with real-life examples and comparisons.
- Identify media for the selected feature article theme – adjust the story angle to the type of media and its audience, focusing on specific aspects of trafficking in human beings and readers' profile.
- Call the media to pitch the feature article - explain why the topic is relevant for certain media, ask if more data is needed, and offer expert signed article where possible.
- Offer a written feature article – this type of article can be an expert article written and signed by an expert engaged in the organisation or within the campaign on trafficking in human beings.
- Proof read the article and send it to the selected and agreed media – if a feature article is signed by an expert, make sure the key messages are mentioned within the content.
- Follow through that the article is published – stay in touch with the selected media outlet, offer further explanations on the topic if needed.
- Monitor media to track down the publication of the article – look for comments and reactions to the story as well, and take press clipping for the file.

## **MARKING AN OCCASION**

A national or international Day against trafficking in human beings is an occasion that focuses attention of media and widest audiences on the importance of this phenomenon in the global society, and is usually marked by a media or public event, followed by a press release.

The communication around the occasion entails dissemination of content based on recent statistical data, trends and activities implemented on the local, regional or global scale, and should involve a press conference, or a round table with expert participation, public stunt, etc.

As a way of creating additional content for media, this opportunity can be used for involving experts to participate in events, and use their quotes in press release and feature article on the organisation's engagement throughout the previous year and the current campaign on trafficking in human beings.

Important to know:

- Select the occasions like the EU Anti Trafficking Day (18 October) or the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (30 July) to prepare events that your campaign relates to.
- Decide how to structure the content around the date – present the current data, achievements and collaborations so far, and plans for future campaigns to involve new stakeholders.
- Identify relevant speakers for the event or for using PR tools – prepare the statistics and illustrations, align the content with key messages.
- Decide on the tool to use to mark the date - e.g. press release, media event, interview or guest appearance in media, and use the speakers' statements appropriately.
- Prepare the desired format based on the tool selected - prepare a press release or organise a media event following the steps described above.
- Follow up with media to ensure the publishing and media coverage – liaise with media after the event or press material dissemination, to provide additional information and gain their attention.
- Monitor media – track down all media cuts about the occasion, and keep the press clipping for your file.

## **WORKING WITH CELEBRITIES**

Engaging with celebrities in the communication brings more attention to the message, as people are interested in what celebrities have to say and often tend to identify with their points of view.

When celebrities participate in communication activities around an awareness raising campaign, the cause becomes more understandable to wider audiences and the campaign gains more visibility and shareability amongst general public.

Credibility is the key to collaborating with celebrities – if they engage themselves actively in the campaign they become synonym for the topic with their appearances and actions, so they need to be carefully chosen for the cause and trusted by people who tend to identify their own behaviors with their role model.

Important to know:

- Carefully choose the celebrity to be engaged in the campaign – one’s reputation, behaviours and attitudes in real life need to be adequate for the campaign cause.
- Align the communication on social media profiles of celebrities – when a celebrity is in the focus of attention, all of their activities are under scrutiny.
- Ensure trust in the message you are conveying – share the campaign key messages with the celebrity and ask them to have that messaging in mind throughout their communication.

This material was prepared by Executive Group, for MARRI RC (Migration, Asylum, Refugee Regional Initiative Regional Center) for the project: Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The materials represent the opinion of the author(s) and are not necessarily representative of the position of the MARRI Regional Centre or GIZ.