



DFID MSP PROJECTS: COMMUNITY MEDIA

Project title: Treatment Literacy Project

Service provider: Community Health Media Trust (CMT)

Aims

The aim of the project was to increase treatment literacy through advocacy and social mobilisation programmes. At the heart of the programmes was the training and deployment of a new cadre of community-based health worker, the Treatment Literacy and Prevention Practitioner (TLPP).

Project description

The project had five specific activities:

- Production of treatment literacy materials and training of Treatment Literacy and Prevention Practitioners
- The production of seven Public Service Announcements containing key HIV messages for use during the *Siyainqoba, Beat It!* television show.
- The appointment and on-the-job training and mentorship of eight young community journalists in South Africa.
- The production of a communications campaign to run alongside the television show *Siyainqoba Beat It!*.
- Monitoring and evaluation of CHMT and Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) Treatment Literacy Practitioners.

Results

Training materials were developed and CHMT and TAC conducted both national and provincial training sessions for Treatment Literacy Practitioners.

CHMT now deploys 77 TLPPs at 110 sites in five provinces. They are operating in 34 clinics where they provide sessions on preventing HIV (abstinence, being faithful and other prevention strategies) plus Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT), palliative care and TB, and treatment issues such as antiretroviral therapy, adherence, side effects etc. TLPPs are also working in 40 schools where they train peer educators and promote prevention through delaying sexual activity, partner reduction and safer sex.

Seven Public Service Announcements were produced that were broadcast on three SABC channels and reached over 700 million viewers. The one-minute inserts used engaging daily life narratives to get their message across. They covered the following subjects: gender-based violence; early testing; substance abuse; teenage pregnancy; transactional and intergenerational sex; multiple concurrent partners; hate crimes (homophobia and xenophobia).

These can be viewed by following this link: <http://www.beatit.co.za/tv-show-psas/index>

Eight young community journalists were trained and produced documentary inserts for the CHMT educational television show *“Siyainqoba Beat It!”* Resources from the MSP were also allocated to complete some episodes in the television show. These covered the following subjects: cervical cancer; substance abuse and HIV; preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV; farm workers and HIV; post-exposure prophylaxis; teenage pregnancy; disclosing your HIV status; the SA National Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS’ stigma and prejudice; water and sanitation; and human rights; and workplace rights and HIV.

In the run-up to the 2008 season of the television show CHMT ran a comprehensive, multi-component communication campaign to increase the audience for *“Siyainqoba Beat It!”* The programme was seen by 873, 240 viewers a week. This was a significant increase on 2006 viewership figures.

The documentary inserts produced by the community journalists can be seen here: <http://www.beatit.co.za/tv-show/index>

MSP funds were also used to develop a simple web-based online database that is not used to monitor the work of the TLPPs and their trainers. This allows for the generation of regular reports which are useful for management and goal-setting of the programme and for demonstrating progress to donors. A cell-phone interface was developed so that people in the field could directly upload monitoring data onto the database via their cell phones.

Conclusion

The programmes described above reached a large number of South Africans. An indication of their impact can be seen by comparing the number of calls to the national AIDS Helpline around the time of the broadcast of the television shows. In 2008 average numbers of calls to the Helpline more than doubled in the hour after the programme was broadcast, in comparison with the hour before.

Large numbers of people responded directly to the various programmes by emails and SMS. One example was a young woman who used the competition phone number to send this SMS.

“Hi, it was 2005 and I was pregnant when I discovered that I am HIV positive. The solution that I had was to shoot myself, firearm was with me bcos I am a policewoman. It was Sunday at 13h30 Siyainqoba beat it talk show presented on tv and the topic 4 the day was how a pregnant mom living with HIV can prevent her child. I have gained a lot up until 2day my child is negative and I am living positive.”

Read more about CHMT and these programmes on their website: <http://www.beatit.co.za/home>