Social Media and Behavior Change Lessons from Meta Brand Lift Studies in Five Countries

FHI 360 and Meta entered into a collaboration to support select projects working toward social and behavior change objectives across five countries to develop social media campaigns. In addition to other ways of measuring impact, each project used Meta's Brand Lift Study (BLS) tool, which allowed teams to evaluate campaigns based on "lift" for both recall as well as knowledge, attitudes, or agency around a behavior for users who saw ads compared with those who did not. Each project focused on different behavioral goals and worked with different populations with unique needs – high-level results and one key challenge from each country are presented below:

Campaign Summaries by Country

SOUTH AFRICA

Key Audience: Men who have sex with men (MSM)

Objective: To increase awareness and uptake of HIV prevention, testing, and treatment services

Results:
- Reached over 3 million people
- *Recall of* campaign was significant for those who saw ads
- *Knowledge* of HIV testing increased with marginal significance for those who saw ads

1 key challenge: Be thoughtful about whether a large-scale social media campaign will serve your audience and objectives. Many users reached were not members of the key audience or lived too far away from the HIV services the campaign promoted – a finding that informed future work.

GHANA

Key Audience: Youth 18-25

Objective: To increase COVID-19 vaccination rates by addressing vaccine hesitancy and skepticism

Results:
- Reached nearly 6.5 million people
- *Recall* of campaign was significant for those who saw ads
- *Perceptions of vaccine safety* increased with marginal significance for those who saw ads

1 key challenge: Leverage influencers, but understand authenticity is a balancing act. The team worked with popular youth influencers and quickly learned that some of their audiences had the perception these influencers were pushing an agenda. Monitoring allowed for a quick response to this, including revisiting branding guidelines for organic versus promoted posts.

NEPAL

Key Audiences: MSM, transgender women, and sex workers

Objective: To increase awareness and uptake of HIV prevention services

Results:
- Reached over 10 million people
- *Recall* of campaign was marginally significant recall for those who saw ads
- *Confidence* using HIV prevention services increased with marginal significance for those who saw ads

1 key challenge: Understand what types of ads appeal in your setting. Learning illustrated that English-language ads weren't performing well and switched them out for ads that used vibrant pictures of key audiences with local-language text.

CAMBODIA

Key Audiences: MSM and transgender women

Objective: To increase awareness and uptake of HIV prevention services

Results:
- Reached over 5 million people
- *Recall* of campaign was significant for those who saw ads
- *Knowledge of* HIV prevention significantly increased and *confidence accessing* HIV prevention marginally increased for those who saw ads

1 key challenge: It was difficult to find members of the key audiences of MSM and transgender women on social media. The team used a careful combination of interests – those entered by each social media user, and those learned by Meta platforms – to better reach target audiences.

THAILAND

Key Audiences: MSM and transgender women

Objective: To increase awareness and uptake of HIV testing prevention services

Results:
- Reached nearly 13 million people
- *Recall* of campaign for those who saw ads was significant for MSM only
- *Self-efficacy* for HIV prevention increased marginally for transgender women who saw ads

1 key challenge: Monitor impact through 'real world' metrics. An objective of the campaign was for people to click through to an HIV services website, but it was not possible to measure how many visitors were from the campaign. Knowing how the campaign translated to offline behavior would have helped to better understand its impact.

Even with five unique campaigns, we learned common lessons and best practices across projects.

KEY FINDINGS: Five Different Campaigns; Five Common Lessons

Understand your audience before developing campaigns. Each project undertook a 'persona exercise' to better understand the people they hoped to engage. This allowed projects to tailor the tone, messaging content, and images – for example, understanding if illustrations or representative photos resonated more – to appeal to their audiences.

Use built-in Meta tools to inform campaigns. Some projects used tools like A/B testing – where two different images are shown to a small pool of users to determine preference. For those who did use it, it provided real-time data on what images and messages were performing best, which allowed tested, highly resonant content to be included in the final campaign. Other analytical tools, like understanding exactly how long average users watch a video before dropping off, allowed teams to optimize their creative elements for their audience.

Know how to find your audience online. Each project understood how to find their audience/s offline, but knowing how to reach them online can be an unfamiliar challenge. Projects used Meta audience insights tools to understand what their online audiences looked like – using filters like age, location, and gender. Other projects with hard-to-reach audiences dove deeper by using 'flex targeting,' or reaching users at the intersections of two or more relevant interests (for example, following both a TV show and a local nightlife spot) that might be common across members of an audience.

Monitor, monitor, monitor. Each project learned the benefits of careful, frequent, and responsive monitoring of campaigns. Some projects learned they were not measuring key metrics like click-throughs to project resources from campaign materials. One project, which worked with influencers, kept a careful eye on comments, and learned that some audience members were responding negatively, and they were able to respond quickly. Another was able to find backlash to their campaign that informed future work.

Don't be afraid to adapt. Even with upfront formative work, campaigns can still surprise you! Each project took place in two phases and was able to learn from the first phase to refine the second. For example, one campaign learned that their illustrated images were not performing well, and were able to replace them with photos of people who were part of their audiences.

Information about all five projects and their results can be found at :
www.fhi360.org/projects/meta-program-scaled-support.