

Brief 7: Development of advocacy events and materials

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL (2018) TO ACCOMPANY CHAPTER 6 (SEE ALSO BRIEF 4: PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND BRIEF 6: MEDIA ENGAGEMENT)

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1. Advocacy events

Typically, advocacy events include high-level decision-makers such as ministry officials, parliamentarians/political leaders, donors, private sector leaders, global health organizations and other notable figures such as ambassadors. Sometimes they include celebrities in sports or entertainment. Examples of opportunities that can be created to convey key messages and engage leaders include:

- Site visits to communities and community health centres; this is especially effective for parliamentarians/political leaders who can see first-hand how malaria affects their communities¹
- Award ceremonies that recognize leaders in the fight against malaria
- A business symposium that highlights the economic effects of malaria

In organizing public advocacy events for high-level government officials, their own public relations staff must be involved throughout the planning process to ensure their effective and efficient involvement during the implementation of communication activities, as well as to ensure that established protocols are followed. There should be agreement on the statements that will be made, as well as which partners and individuals are to be named consistently in statements to the media and

the general public. Invitations should be made to dignitaries and to journalists and photographers to cover these public events. Depending on the level of officials, they may have their own press corps who they will bring to events. Press kits that include press releases and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) should be made available to the broadcast, digital and print media highlighting the key points that will be made at the event and why the event is important to cover. Under the pressure of deadlines, journalists will often integrate much of the content of a press release into their reports. Following an event, photos with captions describing the action can be sent to the broader media.

**SEE BRIEF 6:
MEDIA ENGAGEMENT
FOR MORE IDEAS ON MOBILIZING
THE MEDIA**

2. Advocacy materials

Prior to an advocacy event, the communication subcommittee should prepare advocacy materials in the form of an advocacy kit to be given to public figures. Such kits should contain written material, such as talking points and factsheets. Factsheets should motivate governmental and political leaders to take action by showing how it is in their interest to support the national effort to fight malaria and the ITN distribution campaign specifically. As such, it is important to understand the administrative and legislative health and development priorities so that fact sheets and talking points can be tailored accordingly. Such supportive material may demonstrate, for instance, how the intended action will help its domestic development goals, including improved health for the general public. It may also detail how the steps requested will enable the government to meet its international commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA 2030) Scorecard (see case study below), as well as

1. In multiparty scenarios, consider reaching out to prominent opposition leaders who may not themselves be in government. By including them in mass media, it may neutralize potential hostility that may develop among followers if they feel their leaders are excluded. It is important to consider the country context and political landscape to avoid potential harm created with involving opposition leaders.

ensuring national resources to complement donor support for malaria prevention and treatment. The talking points will help these

leaders to stay on message and to highlight the most important themes in speaking to their counterparts and the general public.

CASE STUDY: ALMA 2030 INITIATIVE

An example of an international commitment designed to motivate political leaders is ALMA, an alliance of 49 African heads of state and government committed to eliminating malaria by 2030. As part of this commitment ALMA (alma2030.org/) established the Malaria Elimination Scorecard to track a country's progress toward eliminating malaria, identify bottlenecks and facilitate appropriate action. The Scorecards and accompanying reports are provided to country leadership on a quarterly basis for review and action towards improving the key indicators around malaria, as well as maternal, neonatal and child health. Countries are now rolling out their own scorecards to enhance accountability and action and track progress nationally.

In addition to written material, the advocacy kits should include visual materials such as the campaign t-shirt/cap/apron, an ITN, posters and other visual aids that the leaders can display in and around their offices, as well as in their personal activities. The use of such items helps them to demonstrate their commitment to, and involvement with, the fight against malaria in their communities and constituencies.

Kits may be adapted to be distributed at sub-national and local level. Kits should give key information and clear messages about the mass distribution campaign and any follow-up activities.