

GETTING THE WORD OUT: A GUIDE TO GETTING MEDIA COVERAGE

Engaging the media can be a powerful way to call attention to an issue that's important to you and to start a conversation in your community.

It's also a tremendous way to promote your group, its events and Oxfam's work.

How to get the media's attention?

There are many ways to get the media's attention; you might choose to do several at the same time. Here are just a few options to get you started:

- Get a local paper to cover your event or promote your group.
- Write a letter to the editor.
- Comment on talkback radio or contact your local community radio station to see if they can come along to an event, or promote your group.
- Organise a media stunt.

Mapping the community

It's important to map out what local media exists in your community. Spend some time at a group meeting brainstorming or researching online to find out what media exists in your area.

Community radio and local newspapers are extremely interested in promoting local events and showcasing what is happening in the community. Reaching out to them is a great way to promote the group's activities and get the local community talking about Oxfam's campaigns and work.

Media consent form

If you are going to use images of people from your events or activities in any media releases or new stories, you need the consent of the people in the image to do so. Download Oxfam's media consent form from the resources page.

Support

Get in touch with your state Community Campaigner and they can support your group with getting media coverage.

Communicate your success

If the group is successful at getting media coverage, let us know! Take a photo of the news article and share it with group members and your Community Campaigner.

Tips for working successfully with the Media

Here are some basic tips for getting into your local media.

Be easy to contact; if possible be available by phone in the lead up to the event and after an event to assist with any questions from journalists. Always respond to calls and emails promptly and make sure you have provided accurate information in advance to any media staff covering the event.

Be familiar with the organisations history, campaigns and policies. You don't need to be an expert it's important that you feel comfortable discussing issues and know your facts. If you need any support with this contact your Community Campaigner.

Build relationships and get to know the media you are going to work with. Take some time to listen to the radio station or reading the papers. This will help you get to know the audiences of the media before you approach them. Get to know the local journalist and build up a good relationship.

Be reliable and trustworthy; keep any promises you make to journalists. It can be useful to ask for a deadline for an article or information – this makes it easier to be reliable. Also, make sure the group member who is liaising with the media contact has the time to fulfil deadlines otherwise there is a risk of damaging relationships.

Do not exaggerate and be honest. Provide accurate and useful information that clearly explains the event, its purpose and expected attendance.

Always plan ahead. Know when deadlines are and keep in mind that they are different for print, radio and TV.

For more information and handy hints

Check out our guides to help get you going in the right direction:

- Tips for Writing a Media Release;
- Media Release Template;
- Tips for Writing a Letter to the Editor;
- Letter to the Editor Template;
- Getting other Media Coverage.